

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الراي

Jordan, Israel work on timetable

AMMAN (I.T.) — Jordanian and Israeli military officials met in Amman on Tuesday to draw up a timetable for border demarcation following an Israeli troop withdrawal, Brigadier Tahseen Shurdum, head of the Jordanian team in the joint border and security committee, said. The two-day meeting was to draw up "a timetable for starting border demarcation based on article three of the peace treaty" signed by the two countries on Oct. 26. He told the Jordan News Agency, Petra. Jordanian troops were ready to deploy in areas from which Israeli troops were due to withdraw, Brig. Shurdum told Petra. Ad hoc committees are also to be set up to implement decisions on military issues and border demarcation on the ground. At a meeting on the Jordanian side of the Dead Sea on Nov. 15 the border and security committee agreed to remove barbed wire and clear minefields from the border area.

Price: Jordan 150 Fils

Jordan dismisses Egyptian report

CAIRO (Agencies) — Jordan on Tuesday dismissed as baseless a report carried in the Egyptian media that the Kingdom was somehow involved in the death of Egyptian workers. Jordan's ambassador to Egypt Nawaf Al Qadi said such news "are totally unfounded and baseless, and are part of attempts aimed at harming Jordanian-Egyptian relations."

He was commenting on a report by an Egyptian weekly that the bodies of 75 Egyptian workers killed in mysterious circumstances in Jordan and Iraq had been returned to Cairo in the past four months, some of them badly mutilated.

Foreign Minister Amr Musa told journalists: "We are deeply concerned and we are making the necessary contacts to shed light on this affair." He announced an official inquiry had been launched.

The weekly Rose Al Yousef said: "The bodies of 75 Egyptians have been repatriated from Iraq and Jordan in less than four months, and some of the corpses were mutilated beyond recognition."

Medical reports accompanying the corpses sent from Jordan said the possible cause of death was murder, yet authorities in Amman said the victim had died in "work accidents," the paper said.

But "most of the bodies had been riddled with bullets," the paper added.

Iraq had not sent any medical reports on the cause of death, "which was without doubt premeditated murder," the paper added.

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Israel and Syria stiffen their stands

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli and Syrian leaders have stepped up warnings that the peace process is in jeopardy ahead of a return to the region next week by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

"If no progress is made with Syria by the end of 1995, we will not be able to continue the process," Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said.

"In 1996 we will have trouble taking difficult decisions," Mr. Rabin said Monday night. He was referring, in a speech to settlers on the Golan Heights, to Israel's general elections scheduled for November 1996.

Mr. Rabin admitted the negotiations with Damascus were "blocked" on all questions — security arrangements, normalisation of diplomatic relations, a timetable for withdrawal and the drawing up of a border.

"Perhaps the negotiations will get nowhere," Mr. Rabin said, but added he had no intention of giving up on the process launched in 1991.

Mr. Christopher, who visits Syria and Israel from next Tuesday on his seventh shuttle to the Middle East this year, had already been given an idea of the size of task awaiting him.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa had earlier Monday in Brussels already issued his own blunt threats.

"No peace in the Middle East without Syria," he said, after brushing aside an offer to meet his Israeli counterpart Shimon Peres.

Israeli agreements with other Arab parties "will not last if there is no peace with Syria," he added.

Mr. Sharaa reiterated Syria's demand for a total Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

"As long as Israel occupies a single parcel of the Golan Heights, we will consider that to be an affront to Syrian dignity."

Mr. Rabin riposted on Israeli Radio on Tuesday: "We have... conditions for our security in the event of signing a peace treaty."

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Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (right) and Prince Hassan of Jordan (left) during a visit to Hebron on Tuesday (AFP photo)

Prince Hassan, Klestil discuss European role in peace era

VIENNA (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Tuesday met with Austrian President Thomas Klestil shortly after his arrival here along with Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath.

Prince Hassan and Mr. Klestil discussed Jordanian-Austrian relations and means of enhancing cooperation.

The two undertook the need to activate Europe's role in the Middle East in the new era with the aim of achieving prosperity, security and stability for the peoples of the region.

The Austrian president lauded efforts exerted by Jordan under the leadership of His Majesty King Hussein to push the peace process forward and praised the

Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty which was signed Oct. 26, describing it as a focal point in achieving a just, comprehensive and balanced peace in the whole Middle East.

Mr. Klestil also praised ideas proposed by Jordan to bring stability and prosperity to the region, especially Prince Hassan's proposals for a European-Middle Eastern partnership to build a better future in the Middle East.

Prince Hassan and Mr. Klestil also discussed at the meeting, which was attended by the delegation accompanying the Crown Prince and senior Austrian officials, scope of cooperation between Jordan and Austria and the prospect of attracting Austria public sector investments to Jordan and the region.

Mr. Klestil stressed his country's support for the Kingdom, pointing out the distinguished relations between the two countries.

Later Tuesday, Prince Hassan met with Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock and senior figures participating in the European interfaith conference held currently in Vienna.

Prince Hassan, who arrived here after paying an official visit to Belgium, was due later Tuesday to participate in the inter-faith conference and to attend a dinner hosted in his honour by the Austrian foreign minister.

Meanwhile, Princess Sarvath Tuesday visited the headquarters of the Austrian Red Cross and was familiarised with its activities and plans.

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Israelis seal 3 Palestinian homes

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israel on Tuesday sealed the East Jerusalem homes of three Palestinians it said were involved in the kidnapping and killing of a soldier last month, police said.

One of the men was shot dead by soldiers during a failed attempt to rescue Corporal Nachshon Waxman. The other two were described as accessories to the kidnapping.

Israeli authorities sealed the houses after the supreme court rejected petitions by family members.

The measures coincided with a remand hearing in military court against the two alleged accessories, named in the charge sheet as Jihad Shakar Yamur, 27, and Zakariya Lutfi Najib, 38.

"We are dealing here with a crime that carries the death penalty," an army prosecutor told the court in the central Israeli town of Lod.

On Thursday, a military court passed a rare death sentence on a Palestinian convicted of planning a bus bombing in Israel in April that killed six people, including the suicide bomber.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin called the sentence, which triggers an automatic appeal, a mistake. Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Israel does not want to become a "gallows state."

Israel has executed only one person in its history, the Nazi camp mastermind Adolf Eichmann in 1962.

At the hearing, Mr. Yamur and Mr. Najib did not enter a plea, pending review of the indictment by their lawyers. They are to be detained until the end of legal proceedings against them.

But Mr. Yamur told reporters: "There was no intention of killing Waxman. If the Israelis had waited one or two more days, or maybe a week, he would have been sent home unhurt."

"You do not have to blame anybody except for Rabin and his government," he said.

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Rabin wants 'separation' between Jews and Arabs

HEBRON, occupied West Bank (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Tuesday that he wanted to create greater separation between Israel and the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, but would not uproot Jewish settlements at this point.

"My goal is to begin the separation," Mr. Rabin told a news conference in Hebron. He stressed that Israel was seeking aid for the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) so that there will be more jobs in the West Bank.

"Then we will not face heavy pressure to give permission to tens of thousands of Palestinians to come work in Israel," he said.

The prime minister was heckled by Jewish settlers during a 10-minute inspection tour of the site of last February's massacre of more than 30 Muslim worshippers by a Jewish settler.

"Rabin, you have no right to give up the Cave of the Patriarchs and Hebron," settler Bentzi Vataro of Kiryat Arba bellowed repeatedly.

"You have no right to visit the tomb," several settlers chanted as Mr. Rabin climbed the steps to the shrine.

"Rabin does not even know how to pray," they shouted.

One settler asked Mr. Rabin if he would surrender the shrine to the Palestinians as autonomy spreads across the West Bank.

"Well we gave up Mount Sinai," the premier riposted, referring to the place where the Bible records that Moses received the 10 Commandments from God.

Military Chief of Staff General Elad Barak accompanied Mr. Rabin around the fortress-like sanctuary.

Mr. Rabin went on a few kilometres to the site of Sunday's killing, near the settlement of Beit Hagai.

Meanwhile, Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, also touring the West Bank on Tuesday, said: "Many settlements will have to be removed in the next two years and others will be grouped together under Israeli sovereignty."

Mr. Sarid, a left-winger, told reporters he envisaged a permanent peace agreement in which settlements would fall into three categories.

"I have no doubt that some, perhaps a significant number, of the settlements will have to be uprooted. Others will remain under another sovereignty, let's say Palestinian."

"And there will be settlements — this is the third part — that will stay within the framework ... of two large blocs under Israeli sovereignty," said Mr. Sarid, a senior member of Israel's negotiating team with the Palestinians.

Mr. Sarid, on a tour of settlements in the West Bank, gave no other details or say whether his outlook was shared by other Israeli government leaders.

Mr. Rabin said it would be difficult to withdraw soldiers from Hebron in advance of Palestinian elections. Under the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreement, the troops are supposed to pull out of major population centres in advance of elections expected soon.

"Hebron presents a special problem in negotiations with the Palestinians. It will be necessary to check to what extent it is possible to hold elections without the (army) leaving Hebron," he said at the news conference.

That drew immediate ire from Palestinian officials.

"Once again Rabin is trying to retreat from implementing the treaty by inventing more excuses and ideas that are totally rejected by the Palestinians," said Hebron Mayor Mustafa Natour.

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Donors meet to study funding for Palestinians

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — Aid donors began a two-day meeting in Brussels on Tuesday to inject urgently needed funds into Palestinian self-rule projects and provide proof to the Palestinian people that peace would bring financial dividends.

Belgian Foreign Minister Frank Van den Broek told the donor group, called the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for Gaza-Jericho, that he hoped the meeting would show results rather than rhetoric.

"We believe, indeed, that the situation in Gaza and in the West Bank needs an urgent response from the international community," Mr. Van den Broek said in an opening address.

He told delegates, including Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat and representatives from the European Union (EU), Russia and the United States, that the international community had to prove it was serious about providing aid.

"The economic decline, the growing despair and frustration of the population, that has seen so little evidence up to now that peace leads to improvement in their standard of living, are challenges which this meeting must address," Mr. Van den Broek said.

In October last year, donors pledged more than \$2.4 billion over five years for projects to support Palestinian self-rule, with \$700 million earmarked for this year.

A senior World Bank official said only \$200 to \$240 million would be disbursed this year and delays in implementing the peace process had set back economic projects.

Concrete proof of funding came earlier on Tuesday when the World Bank signed an accord with Mr. Arafat for a \$58 million credit to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

"This is a very important milestone on the road to reconstruction and bringing relief and support to the Palestinian people," said Mr. Koch-Weser, World Bank vice-president for the Middle East and North Africa region, told a news conference.

Mr. Arafat, on a three-day visit to Brussels, thanked the World Bank for signing the accord and appealed to donors to keep their promises of much-needed aid.

"The international community has a moral and political responsibility towards our people," he said, adding that Israeli occupation had destroyed his country.

Mr. Koch-Weser said the Palestinians would only receive between \$200 million and \$240 million this year.

"It is not that the money has not arrived, it has not arrived to the extent that we foresaw and we have to draw lessons from that," he said.

The bank had hoped that once pledges were translated into specific projects, \$410 million could have been paid over this year. But the figure had had to be halved.

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During the meeting the donor countries should "fully agree to accelerate now, by simplifying procedures, the flow of funds and ... the actual benefits on the ground that reach all Palestinians," Mr. Koch-Weser said.

Mr. Arafat called for the meeting to find a system "to move very quickly far away from bureaucracy" holding up the funding transfers.

Unemployment among Gaza's nearly 800,000 people hangs at 50 per cent. The United Nations estimates economic activity has shrunk by more than 25 per cent in the past year.

With desperation rising, hardline groups easily recruit Palestinians. Extremists have carried out violent attacks in Israel that have claimed dozens of victims since last month.

The United Nations was expected to propose to donors an emergency aid package to finance public works and create 20,000 jobs.

The 12-nation European Union has budgeted \$500 million European currency units (\$600 million) for the former

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Hamas offers conditional dialogue with Arafat

By Lamis K. Andoni
Special to the Jordan Times

HAMAS IS ready to open a dialogue with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) if Yasser Arafat takes serious steps to uncover those responsible for opening fire at protesters in Gaza on Nov. 18.

"It (a dialogue) depends on Arafat, if he decides to cover up on those responsible for the massacre then a political dialogue will not be possible," said Ibrahim Ghosheh, spokesman for Hamas.

He said the PNA should take confidence-building measures to prove its credibility for Hamas to engage in serious negotiations.

A major step towards confidence building will be the formation of a neutral public commission to investigate the death of at least 14 Palestinians when PNA police opened fire at protesters on Nov. 18.

Mr. Arafat has set up two committees to investigate the shootout on Friday Nov. 18, when Palestinian police opened fire at protesters near a downtown mosque in the Gaza Strip.

"The authority cannot possibly be the enemy and the judge," the Hamas official said.

Mr. Ghosheh, however, said that contacts between Hamas and the PNA to prevent mutual provocations and clashes will continue.

"Our priority is to prevent a civil war... thus we differentiate between an in-

depth political dialogue and contacts to prevent clashes," he told the Jordan Times in an interview.

Mr. Ghosheh's statements appeared more conciliatory than his previous call on Mr. Arafat to step down and leave the Palestinian people to decide their future.

In the interview, the Hamas official implied that he had not necessarily backed down on his call, but that if the situation warranted that the Islamic Resistance Movement deal with the PNA then certain conditions will have to be met.

"Arafat has to prove that he is ready to be objective about the investigation." Some officials from Fatah, Mr. Arafat's power

base, charged Hamas with killing at close range eight Fatah activists inside and outside the mosque.

Information available shows that two Fatah supporters were killed in front of the mosque.

Mr. Ghosheh said that Hamas wanted Mr. Arafat to reveal who gave the orders to the police to open fire at the protesters.

Hamas demands seem to aim more at exposing and embarrassing Mr. Arafat since he is believed to control all decisions in the PNA.

Mr. Arafat had resorted to a show of force by Fatah to counter Hamas' political offensive against the authority.

The revival of Fatah's role in Gaza has apparently surprised Hamas, which was asserting itself as the group commanding the Palestinian street.

Hamas has tried to stay away from any direct attacks against Fatah per se and focused its criticism on the PNA and its security apparatus.

According to various Palestinian sources Hamas officials believe that the internal Fatah opposition to Mr. Arafat's policies and the Israeli-Palestinian agreement will pressure the PNA leader not to use Fatah against the opposition.

Fatah Central Committee members Farouk Kadoumi and Abbas Zak had held the PNA partly responsible for the Nov. 18 clash.

U.N. urges donors to fulfil pledges to Palestinians

Following is a statement of U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali on the occasion of the international Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people.

ON THIS day last year, I spoke of the historic developments that had taken place in connection with the question of Palestine. The past year has witnessed further dramatic and encouraging developments.

Following the declaration of principles signed in September 1993 by the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Israel, negotiations between the parties led to the signing in May 1994 in Cairo of the agreement on Gaza Strip and the Jericho area; the withdrawal of Israeli troops from most of those areas; the establishment of the Palestinian Authority and the deployment of the Palestinian police force; and the signing, in August 1994, of the agreement on preparatory transfer of powers and responsibilities regarding the West Bank.

Last month we warmly welcomed the signing of the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel. It is my fervent hope that this historic event will be followed by full implementation of the declaration of principles and progress on the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli tracks of the peace process. The goal of the international community — the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East based on Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 — will then truly be within its grasp.

In commemorating this International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the United Nations expresses its ongoing responsibility towards the Palestinian people.

I also take this opportunity to commend the efforts of the committee on the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

But this occasion is also a time for drawing attention to current needs and difficulties. In that regard I would be failing in my duty as secretary-general if I did not draw attention to the dangerous gap which has opened between the expressed commitment of the international community to support the Palestinian people, and the result on the ground.

The international community has pledged some \$670 million for 1994. Yet today, with eleven months of the year already gone, less than \$200 million has actually reached the occupied territories. Well over half of this assistance has been channelled through the United Nations programmes and agencies operating in the area.

In fact, during the past year, the United Nations has significantly enlarged its programmes of economic, social and other assistance in the occupied territories. With a view of ensuring effective coordination and inter-institutional cooperation, I appointed in June 1994 Ambassador Terje Rod Larsen of Norway as special coordinator in the occupied territories. His efforts have focused primarily on Gaza, where needs are greatest. In close cooperation with the World Bank and the donor community, he is working actively to mobilise the resources and expertise of the United Nations system in support of the Palestinian Authority.

The experience of the United Nations in other parts of the world has shown repeatedly that, in a post-conflict situation, the infusion of economic resources, together with concerted action on a number of other fronts, is essential if true and lasting peace is to be secured.

The commitment of the international community to the peace process in the region and remains crucial to its success. But that political commitment must now be matched by immediate, concrete support to the Palestinian people as they begin the task of rebuilding their society.

Today, therefore, I call on the international community to ensure the prompt and effective delivery of the assistance already pledged, but not yet delivered, to the Palestinian people, in the course of this year.

I also call on member states of the United Nations to make every effort to sustain, and if possible to increase, current levels of support in the course of 1995.

It would be tragic indeed if the failure of the international community to match its words with deeds were to jeopardise a peace process for which so many have given so much — including, in some cases, their lives — at a time when a lasting and comprehensive peace seems to be at last within sight in the Middle East.

On this important occasion, I reiterate my pledge to make every possible effort in support of peace in the Middle East, and to ensure that the United Nations system contributes its utmost in the fields of economic and social development. The Palestinian people, to whom this Organisation has maintained a special commitment for nearly five decades, deserve no less.

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel refused to buy a French nuclear reactor a decade ago because Paris insisted that the Jewish state turn a blind eye to the rebuilding of an Iraqi reactor, according to Energy Minister Moshe Shahal. Israeli warplanes destroyed Iraq's Osirak reactor in June 1981 amid fears that Baghdad was developing a nuclear bomb. Mr. Shahal told a meeting of the nuclear associations of Israel on Monday night that in 1984 France had proposed an experimental reactor to replace the Osirak plant, which had also been supplied by Paris. Israel refused the conditions categorically, he said. Mr. Shahal, who was also energy minister between 1984 and 1988, said Israel should now purchase a nuclear reactor to cope with a seven per cent a year growth in electricity consumption. He said he expected that Israel would carry on supplying electricity to the Palestinians in the West Bank even after a political settlement in the region. Israel has two experimental nuclear reactors, according to foreign reports on the secret programme, but does not produce electricity from them.

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HOME SEALED: Israeli policemen seal under heavy guard the house of Hamas activist Abdul Karim Badr's family in Beit Hanina Jerusalem's neighbourhood on Tuesday. Israeli

security forces bricked up three houses owned by the families of Muslim fundamentalists who kidnapped Israeli soldier Nachshon Waxman Oct. 14 (see page one) (AFP)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel reject French nuclear conditions

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Bedoons may get temporary Kuwaiti cards

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Stateless Arabs could be given temporary Kuwaiti identity cards under a draft law to go before parliament, officials said Tuesday. Rashed Al Hubeida, chairman of the parliamentary committee for internal affairs and defence, told the daily Al Watan that the card would give holders the right to "work, education and public health as well as a driving licence." Some 120,000 stateless Arabs, or bedoon, live in Kuwait and were either refused Kuwaiti nationality or were never offered it when the country gained its independence in 1961. The committee approved the bill first put forward by the government in 1993, but it still has to be approved by the full parliament. The cards will be valid for a year and withdrawn once the holders' final status has been decided by the interior ministry, Mr. Hubeida said. The status of the bedoon is to be decided on an individual basis. Under the draft law, some may be granted Kuwaiti citizenship, others will be given a residence permit and the rest will be asked to leave the country.

AIDS kills 89 in Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — AIDS has so far claimed 89 lives in Iran, including seven deaths since July, Health Minister Alireza Marandi announced Tuesday. Mr. Marandi told a seminar on AIDS education that 291 others — among them 35 women and one child — had contracted the disease in the Islamic republic. The last official figures, released in July, showed 82 deaths and 283 cases of the acquired immune deficiency syndrome. Mr. Marandi told the newspaper Kayhan that the situation was not "yet worrisome" but the authorities were concerned about the spread of AIDS in the Islamic republic. He urged dentists, clinics, medical laboratories and barber's shops to conform to health standards. Marriage at an early age was also recommended to guard against promiscuity. The authorities launched an AIDS awareness campaign two years ago to fight the disease. Deputy Health Minister Hussein Malek Afzali said last year the number of Iranians infected with the HIV virus leading to full-blown AIDS could be as high as 5,000.

Two demonstrators killed in Mogadishu

MOGADISHU (R) — Two Somalis protesting against the holding of rival peace conferences were shot dead by gunmen loyal to Lord Mohammed Farah Aideed, witnesses said on Tuesday. As many as 12 other people, including women and children, were injured in the shooting on Monday morning in the south of the Somali capital. The two dead had been part of a demonstration by moderate members of General Aideed's Habr Gedir clan protesting against parallel peace conference of Gen. Aideed and his arch-rival, Abi Mahdi Mohammad Gunmen in four "technical" improvised gunwagons drove up to the demonstrators who, though armed, had been peacefully shouting slogans and opened fire indiscriminately. They also seized weapons, cars and loud speakers after the demonstrators fled, the witnesses said. A clan elder, Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad, denounced the shooting and described the attackers as "bandits."

Israel says 1,067 killed in uprising

OCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The Israeli army has released new casualty tolls from the Palestinian uprising against Israeli rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip that began in Dec. 1987.

The figures, released over the weekend, include only wounded and dead from the West Bank and Gaza and do not include attacks inside Israel.

According to the army, Israeli soldiers killed 1,067 Palestinians in those areas between Dec. 7, 1987 and Nov. 2, 1994, and 978 Palestinians were killed by fellow Arabs, most as suspected collaborators with Israel.

Another 12 Palestinians died during attempted attacks, the army said. Palestinians killed 52 soldiers as well as 62 civilians (Israeli and tourists) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. There were no separate figures for the number of tourists killed.

The AP count, that covers Dec. 7, 1987 to Nov. 28, 1994 and includes deaths in Israel, is 1,332 Palestinians killed by Israelis, 827 Palestinians killed by Arabs and 239 Israelis (soldiers and civilians) killed by Palestinians. The AP also counts Palestinians killed by Israeli civilians.

The launching of the peace talks in October 1991 did not put an end to violence in the area, but most of the subsequent attacks on Israelis were carried out by opponents to the negotiations.

In contradiction to the progress made in peace talks during 1993, 44 Israelis were killed during that year, 38 per cent of the overall Israeli uprising victims, the army figures stated.

There was also a relative increase in the number of Palestinians killed that year, although dramatically less than the total killed in 1988 and 1989.

The uprising has never been officially called off, although it was one of Israel's conditions for signing an autonomy accord in September 1993.

Turkish troops start winter drive on Kurds

TUNCELI (R) — Turkish troops have begun a winter offensive against Kurdish rebels in a major change of tactic with the hope of wiping guerrillas out in their lairs, military and regional officials said.

They said 40,000 troops in the eastern province of Tunceli on Saturday began the first concerted winter drive in the 10-year war with the separatist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK).

"In order to clean out the PKK this winter, an offensive has begun from outside Tunceli, moving inwards with the support of forces from neighbouring provinces," an army official said.

The operation coincides with a ceasefire offer by PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan in a letter addressed to world leaders.

Fighting in the turbulent southeast has usually slowed down in past winters as both the military and the guerrillas find it hard to get around in the bitter conditions of the region.

But this time some 2,000 commandos especially trained for winter guerrilla fighting had been brought into the area from various centres, another military source said.

He predicted this would be more successful than the summer offensive as the PKK could no longer hide in forests and had to sit in hideouts — becoming easy targets — until spring.

The drive follows a push from mid-September which one army officer called the biggest in modern Turkish military history.

The operation encompasses the eight districts of Tunceli province, with intense fighting in Ovacik, Hozat and Pertek districts, which form a line from northwest to southeast.

So-called repentant guerrillas working with security forces are one of the biggest advantages of the army campaign as they guide troops to PKK hideouts, military officials said.

"Some of the PKK hideouts, which were located in the summer, were not destroyed. Traps are being set there and the PKK (guerrillas) will be hit when they try to enter them," a military source in Tunceli told Reuters.

Security forces want to flush out some 2,000 rebels in Tunceli, moving between the inaccessible 30 kilometres long Kutudere mountain and 3,000 metres high Munzur mountains.

More than 13,000 people have been killed in Turkey since the PKK began its 10-year fight for an independent Kurdish state in southeast Turkey.

Mubarak suspends pyramid motorway

CAIRO (AFP) — President Hosni Mubarak has ordered a halt to construction work on a motorway slicing past the pyramids, but a final decision will not be taken for another two weeks, officials said Tuesday.

Mr. Mubarak ordered the work to be suspended pending the outcome of an archaeological study into the possible effects of the road, which will pass within 2.5 kilometres of the Sphinx and the three pyramids at Giza, just outside Cairo, Information Minister Safwat Al Sherif said.

A senior official from Egypt's antiquities department, Ali Hassan, added: "A final decision on whether or not to continue construction will be taken in two weeks based on whether current exploratory work shows if there are buried antiquities."

UNESCO, which has led the international outcry over building the motorway close to the last of the seven wonders of the world still to survive, gave Mr. Mubarak's decision a guarded welcome.

"We are very happy with the suspension, but it is not enough. The work must be stopped permanently," said Said Zulfikar, an official from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in Paris.

Mr. Zulfikar, an outspoken critic of the project, has described the motorway as illegal and in violation of both Egyptian and international law on the protection of the world's heritage.

He has also warned that if the motorway went ahead the site containing the Sphinx, the Great Pyramid and two others dating from 2680 B.C. to 2560 B.C. could be struck off the UNESCO list of the world's heritage, and \$60,000 in annual aid to Egypt could be suspended.

UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor would send Mr. Mubarak a letter within the next few days asking for "an alternative to be found," Mr. Zulfikar said.

Permission to build the 90-kilometre long Cairo-by-pass was given by a former official at the antiquities department who said there were no more artefacts buried in the road's path.

But Mr. Zulfikar said: "The ban on building stretches across 70 square kilometres and has nothing to do with whether there are archaeological treasures or not in the zone," which comprises the pyramid plateau and surrounding land.

The UNESCO Heritage Committee is due to meet in Phuket, Thailand, from December 9 to 17 when Giza would probably be put "on the list of endangered sites," Mr. Zulfikar told AFP last week.

The \$300 million road linking Giza, 12 kilometres southwest of Cairo to Yaoum, 100 kilometres further south, is almost finished.

"It is a sin to build this road, we have to cancel it construction even if we do find any archaeological remains because in the future the motorway will encourage urbanisation all around it," said Mr. Hassan.

He regretted that the former managers of the antiquities department had approved the project in 1985.

Iran battles for spiritual control of world's Shiites

By Anwar Faruqi
The Associated Press

NICOSIA — In a bid to enforce its own version of militant Islam, Iran is trying to control the selection of the next spiritual leader of the world's 100 million Shiite Muslims.

The task gained new urgency three weeks ago when the incumbent, Grand Ayatollah Ali Akbari, was admitted to the intensive care unit of a Tehran hospital. Ayatollah Akbari is at least 100 years old — possibly as old as 106.

He is the last in a line of elderly spiritual guides who have dominated Shiite theology for the past century. Given the current composition of the Shiite religious hierarchy, Ayatollah Akbari's successor almost certainly will be a man in his 60s or 70s — which means he could hold the post for decades.

For the world in general, the Shiites "marja ala" or "supreme spiritual guide" has been eclipsed by lower-ranking clergy men, such as the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, patriarch of Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution.

But to Shiites, the marja ala is their supreme spiritual force. He is also a potential challenger of the Tehran government, both at home among Iran's overwhelmingly Shiite population of 60 mil-

lion and abroad, where Iran seeks to export its revolutionary zeal.

Tehran fears that a non-Iranian, Grand Ayatollah Ali Hussein Seestani, may become the next marja ala. Ayatollah Seestani, 65, lives and teaches in Najaf, the ancient centre of Shiite learning in southern Iraq.

Although the government has no official say in who becomes the next marja ala, it has, in effect, already vetoed Ayatollah Seestani's selection.

Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati, a senior cleric in the Tehran government, said more than a week ago that Iranian clerics "have no intention of choosing a marja ala from outside Iran."

He said Iran's enemies were conspiring to establish an apolitical marja ala in an effort to undermine Tehran's authority.

Ayatollah Seestani has steered clear of politics, as have other supreme guides of the faith. That is anathema to Iran, which seeks to abolish the separation of religion and politics.

Traditionally, the marja ala is selected from among the Shiite sect's top clerics, or grand, ayatollahs. At present, there are at least five grand ayatollahs — but there is a possibility that the Iranian clergy have elevated or

will elevate a few more in time to choose Ayatollah Akbari's successor.

The selection of the marja ala is not a matter of precise ballot-counting. Instead, it emerges by consensus from the 1,000-year-old seminary in Najaf and its counterparts in the Iranian city of Qom.

The leadership issue deeply divides the Shiites, who comprise about 10 per cent of the world's one billion Muslims.

In a biting editorial earlier this month, Iran's Salaam newspaper criticised the idea that the next marja ala must be an Iranian.

Such suggestions are "an insult to Shiite people worldwide," said Salaam, which speaks for Islamic hardliners who think the Tehran government has grown too moderate and must return to what they see as the "purity" of Ayatollah Khomeini's revolution.

In Lebanon, where the Iranian-financed Hizbollah generally does Tehran's bidding, a split has emerged on the same issue.

Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah, Hizbollah's spiritual mentor, has pledged allegiance to Ayatollah Seestani. Sheikh Hassan Nassrallah, Hizbollah's political guide, is backing Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's spiritual leader.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:00 ... Two-Two
17:30 ... Les Tresors Du Monde
1



CONGRATULATORY VISIT: His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Bin Al Hussein Tuesday visits Lower House of Parliament Speaker Sa'd Hayel Sour to congratulate him on his election. The meeting was attended by Upper House Speaker Ahmad Lawzi (Petra photo)

Ministry to head for meeting on Arab environmental protection

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan is taking part in an Arab League meeting in Cairo next week to discuss protection of the Arab environment, and will submit a proposal on a pan-Arab strategy on sustainable development which takes into consideration safeguards against pollution, according to Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Tawfiq Kreishan.

The minister Tuesday said that he would present the proposal during discussions on development and economic integration among Arab states.

According to Mr. Kreishan, Arab ministers responsible for the environment in their countries will discuss three main themes: desertification and increasing the green areas of the Arab world; spreading awareness through the media on the protection of the environment; and a programme for combating industrial pollution.



Tawfiq Kreishan

Mr. Kreishan, who is leading the Jordanian delegation to the meeting, said the Arab ministers would also discuss cooperation with European nations in stemming pollution resulting from activities in agriculture, industry, trade and tourism.

Through earlier Euro-Arab dialogues, the European nations had promised to extend financial and technical

help to the Arab countries and the rest of the developing nations in environmental protection matters, said the minister.

The Arab ministers, he said, will also discuss cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) which usually provides technical advice and expertise in helping countries to formulate national environment strategies and in protecting the soil and fighting off desertification.

Other points on the agenda, said Mr. Kreishan, include a report by Arab experts on agricultural and rural development and the pollution to sea water from vessels dumping poisonous waste.

He said that the Arab League has prepared a memorandum on inter-Arab cooperation in monitoring vessels which dump radioactive and other poisonous waste into the sea close to Arab shores.

Prime minister leaves for Ghana to attend U.N. University meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali left for Accra, the capital of Ghana, to participate in the meetings of the board of trustees of the United Nations University.

Dr. Majali will hold meetings with senior Ghanaian officials to discuss Afro-Arab relations, as well as ties between Jordan and Ghana.

The U.N. University's board of trustees is scheduled to study a Jordanian proposal for the establishment of an institute in Amman designed to train junior government officials.

Dr. Majali will submit an outline about the proposed institute and answer queries related to its objectives and services.

The board is expected to give its consent to the idea of such an institute and approve its establishment in Amman.

The proposed establishment would offer training to promising government leaders from 160 nations who would be discussing domestic,

regional and international affairs.

The United Nations University was established in Japan in 1973 upon a decision by the U.N. General Assembly and started operations in September 1975.

With lectures in English, French and Spanish, the university provides postgraduate training to scholars from different countries, with a special focus on the role and the activities of the United Nations and its charter.

The university aims at enabling the countries of the developing world to find proper means to settle their problems via help from advanced nations and cooperation with various countries.

Issues concerning the operations of the various U.N. agencies as well as matters related to social sciences, natural sciences and humanities are given priority.

The university is governed by a board of directors comprised of 28 members appointed for a six-year term



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali (center) Tuesday leaves for Accra, capital of Ghana. Dr. Majali was seen off at the airport by Interior Minister Salameh Hammad (right) and Minister of State Abdullah Al Jazi (left) (Petra photo)

by the U.N. secretary general and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) director general.

It is funded by the Japanese government and re-

ceives contributions from various organisations.

Between 1977 and 1981 the university conducted studies on world hunger and socio-economic development, and between 1982 and 1987 it

dealt with issues of peace, security and settling conflicts around the world.

The university employs leading scholars and scientists from different countries to conduct research and lecture.

Amman mayor inaugurates private cable-car enterprise

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Deputising for His Majesty King Hussein, Amman Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi Tuesday formally inaugurated the King Abdullah Gardens cable-car system called Amman Skyride, which was built by the Jordan Panorama Touristic Establishment (JPTTE) in cooperation with a French company.

The 18 cable-cars seat six persons each, according to Dr. Abbadi.

He said the cars run along 367 metre long cables which at one point rise some 30 metres above the ground. The trip from the street level to the top of the run takes five minutes, Dr. Abbadi

added.

At the top of a hill overlooking the King Abdullah Gardens, visitors can dine at a restaurant installed there by the same establishment, he said.

According to Dr. Abbadi the firm spent JD 1.5 million on the project, the first of its kind in Jordan, and it will pay about JD 25,000 annually in concessions to the municipality.

A one-way ride in the cable-car will cost JD 1 per person, said Dr. Abbadi.

Dr. Abbadi took a ride in one of the cable-cars at the opening ceremony, said that the project was expected to stimulate domestic tourism in Jordan.



Amman Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi Tuesday draws the curtain open on a plaque commemorating the inauguration of the first cablecar recreational facility in Jordan (Petra photo)

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

FILM

★ Video film entitled "The Body in the Library" at the British Council at 7:00 p.m.

LECTURES

★ Lecture on the poems of Rafael Alberti and Abdel Wahhab Al Bayati by Ms. Nedra Chaaban at Instituto Cervantes (the Spanish Cultural Centre) at 6:00 p.m.
★ Lecture in German on 150th anniversary of German philosopher Nietzsche entitled

"Friedrich Nietzsche — Übermensch Und Weltanschauung" at Goethe-Institut at 7:00 p.m.

CHARITY BAZAAR

★ Charity bazaar (includes books, tapes, clothes, and accessories) at Mu'tah University.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Motor show '95 at the International Motor Exhibition, airport highway.
★ Exhibition of paintings by Saadi Al Kaabi at Alla Art Gallery.
★ Exhibition of sculptures by 'Amer Khalil at Baladna Art Gallery.
★ Ceramics exhibition by Mahmoud Taha at Darat Al Funun.

Thunderstorms expected today

AMMAN (Petra) — Heavy rains and thunderstorms are expected today as a result of a low atmospheric pressure centred southeast of the Mediterranean accompanied by a cold air mass, according to Meteorology Department sources.

The sources said temperatures will drop to a minimum of 6°C in the eastern plains and badia (desert area), 7°C in Amman and the eastern hills and 12°C in Aqaba.

The sources expected the weather conditions to improve beginning Thursday evening.

Mayo Clinic team arrives for medical link up talks

AMMAN (J.T.) — A visiting team from Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, in the U.S. Tuesday met with Yousef Qousus, director of the Royal Medical Services and Ghaith Shubailat and Jihad Barghouti of the Amman Surgical Hospital to discuss linking the famed American clinic with the King Hussein Medical Centre and the Amman Surgical Hospital via satellite.

The link-up arrangement give patients of the two Jordanian medical facilities access to the expertise of the Mayo Clinic in diagnosis and treatment without having to travel.

According to Dr. Qousus, discussion covered the mechanism of the link-up which would also entail a series of workshops and medical seminars, the ex-



Doctors from the Royal Medical Services as well as the Amman Surgical Hospital Tuesday meet with a visiting team from the Mayo Clinic in the U.S. (Petra photo)

change of visits by specialists and medical consultations.

The meeting resulted in agreement on the formation of a joint committee to follow up on procedures and imple-

ment the required arrangements.

His Majesty King Hussein had earlier announced that he personally provides the

funding for the link-up process. The King underwent successful surgery for cancer at the Mayo Clinic in August 1992.

Pioneering legal advice bureau reaches out to women

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — In a tiny office, frugally furnished with a cupboard, a writing desk, and some simple chairs, music from a tape recorder grates through the kitchen-like wall from the kitchen next door and lawyer Dia Al Biss takes a final look at some files and prepares her bag.

It is 1:30 p.m., time to go home and see her four children. At 2 p.m. her colleague In'am Asha, a social worker, will take Ms. Biss' seat.

Ms. Biss has had five clients today, some of them, she says "tough nuts to crack."

In the six months since its establishment, the Legal Advice Bureau for Women in Wihdat, the first of its kind in the Kingdom, seems to have justified its existence, although many women still have to get used to the idea of talking to a stranger about their domestic problems.

"Violence in the family, for instance, is still less of an issue here, though we know it exists," Ms. Biss says. "Unfortunately, many women think that it is normal that their husbands beat them."

The Legal Advice Bureau for Women was set up by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), but is financially independent. It was established last March upon the request of women

from Wihdat, with an initial donation of JD 15,000 from the German government. With this money, the bureau is supposed to operate until the end of this year. What will happen after that, is still unclear.

"We are drawing up proposals to get further financing," says UNRWA staff member Maha Abdelhamid, "but until now we do not know where the money is going to come from."

Female lawyers in Jordan started to combat legal illiteracy among women about 10 years ago, says Asma Khader, a lawyer and human rights activist who initiated the bureau. "We started with lectures and training courses on women's rights here and there, and soon the demand spread around the country."

Legal literacy classes are also part of the project now established at Wihdat, with a special focus on young girls.

"The average marriage age is quite low here, many girls get married at the age of 16 or even less," says Ms. Biss, "so we try to reach them and tell them about their rights before they enter a marriage contract."

The bureau provides legal and social assistance to women daily from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

According to Ms. Khader, head of the bureau, and

staff members, the bureau receives between 5 and 15 women daily.

"Women come to us with all kinds of problems," says Ms. Biss, "marital questions, labour conflicts, conflicts within the family, and, above all, financial problems."

The bureau does not provide immediate financial aid, but it has been able to help in several cases because, besides her work at the bureau, Ms. Asha is employed at the Ministry of Social Development and is therefore able to direct those who are most in need to the relevant government institutions.

A 52-year-old housewife,

"We do not send anybody away. We always try to find a solution."

illiterate and mother of five, whose husband was paralysed and unable to work, learnt through the bureau that her family had the right to receive JD 52 per month from the government.

The bureau is also in touch with religious welfare institutions which help in cases where government aid is unavailable. The single payment (from these institutions) usually do not exceed JD 30 to 40, "because there are so many women and families in need," says Maha Hushme, who works as an assistant with the bureau.

The legal advice bureau also tries to find jobs for

unemployed women who need to work to support themselves and their families.

One such 32-year-old school teacher who was abandoned by her husband after one year of marriage, found a job with a private school through the bureau. Her monthly salary of JD 60 is insufficient, but the job allowed her to be at least partly self-reliant and helped her to win back her self-esteem, according to the bureau's staff.

The bureau's files show that most women come to the centre because of divorce issue. Men often are unable or unwilling to pay alimony to their ex-wives to

help support them and their children if any.

A 23-year-old woman left her husband after two years of marriage because she felt her mother-in-law was too domineering. Her husband, who earns JD 100 a month, refused to pay her alimony. The young woman has a daughter.

Another case involved a husband who went to work in the Gulf states soon after his marriage. Although his wife gave birth to a daughter, he did not visit his family in two years, nor did he send his wife any money, although, as the woman claimed, he was earning JD

1000 a month.

In both cases, the bureau provided the women with basic legal information and then helped them to see a lawyer and take their cases to court. Both cases were decided in favour of the women.

In case a woman or her family are unable to pay legal fees, the bureau directs her to a woman's organisation which covers these expenses.

"We do not send anybody away. We always try to find a solution," says Ms. Biss.

During November alone, the bureau received more than 25 women who had been or were about to be divorced. According to Ms. Hushme, marital trouble is often a consequence of financial problems.

"A growing number of men leave their wives and families because they cannot manage to provide support for them. In this case, the women are often left behind without any financial means."

Many women who come to the bureau are seeking employment not for themselves but for their sons or husbands, according to Ms. Biss. "Mothers often wish to find jobs for their sons, so they can get married," she explains.

The bureau's staff also try to help women who suffer from psychological problems. A government employee with a degree in business administration,

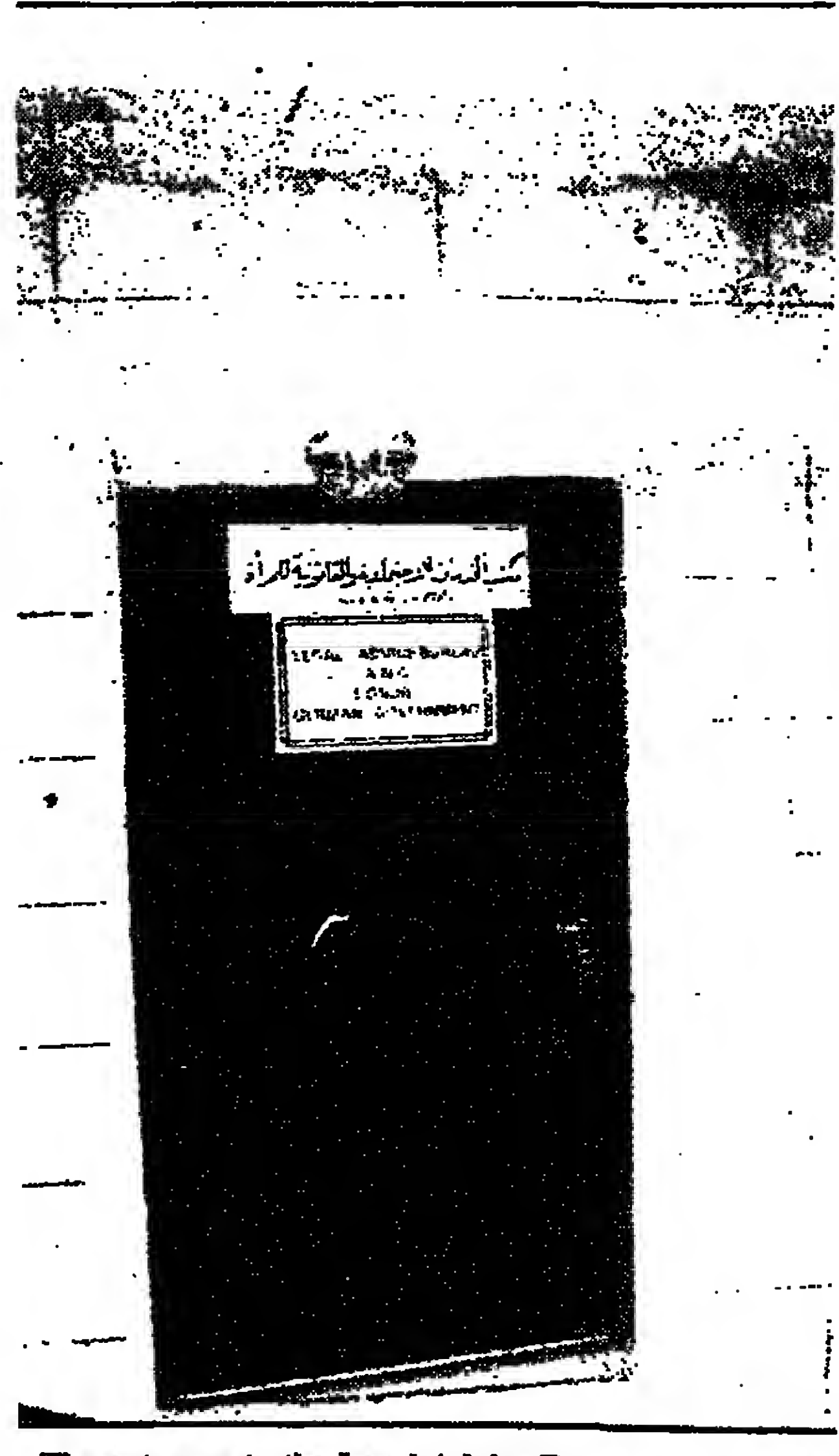
who after two years of marriage had not had any children and was abandoned by her husband, was subsequently facing difficulties in concentrating on and fulfilling her work duties. She feared being fired, but had no one to talk to about her problems, "not even her mother," Ms. Hushme says, adding that "to come to the bureau and be able to talk about her problems and fears was a great relief for her." The bureau advised the young lady to see a psychologist.

Confidence in the bureau's services has increased significantly since its directors introduced an organisational change in November, Asma Khader says.

"In the beginning, we had several lawyers working here voluntarily, each of them coming only once a week," she says, "but that system did not work out. The women who seek help at the bureau need a fixed person to talk to, to build up confidence."

Now Ms. Biss and Ms. Asha work at the bureau six days a week. Ms. Biss grew up in Wihdat, where she spent 12 years of her childhood, and she says: "I like the place." People are very active here.

The experience at Wihdat has encouraged the organisers to carry out their original plan and open a second advice bureau soon, either in Marka or in Jabal Hussein camp.



The entrance to the Legal Advice Bureau for Women in Wihdat

Fire kills 233 in China dance hall

BEIJING (R) — The worst fire of China's 15-year-old economic reform era engulfed a dance hall crowded with weekend revellers in northeastern China, killing 233 people and injuring 16, local officials said Tuesday.

The fire ripped through the single-storey hall in Fuxin town in northeastern Liaoning province Sunday afternoon, a Fuxin Fire Department official told Reuters by telephone.

He said 233 people — 132 men and 101 women — died in the blaze even though it was extinguished within minutes.

Most of the victims suffocated in heavy smoke and from poisonous fumes believed to have been emitted by building or decoration materials as the fire gutted the 302 square metre building, the official said.

Firefighters rescued 16 injured from the blazing hall and all were only slightly hurt, he added.

Beijing's fire fighting bureau said the blaze was China's worst since a cinema fire in northwestern Xinjiang province killed more than 600 people in 1979, the dawn of paramount leader Deng Xiaoping's march to market reforms.

Many officials blame frenzied and often ill-conceived economic development unleashed by Mr. Deng's market economy for a rapid rise in fire accidents during the reform era.

Fuxin firefighters heard of the fire at 1:37 p.m. local time Sunday and reached the scene, just two kilometres away, within five minutes, the local official said.

Fourteen fire engines and 85 firefighters took only eight minutes to control the fire but that was not fast enough to prevent the huge death toll.

"Perhaps the main reason why the people could not escape was because of the smoke and poisonous fumes," the official said.

It was not immediately known if emergency exits were adequate or accessible. Blocked exits have been a chronic factor in high death tolls in many other fires in China.

Experts were at the site to try to determine the cause of the blaze and a high-level team had flown up from the fire fighting bureau in Beijing to investigate the fire.

"The whole building is destroyed except for some of the wooden frame and the window frames," the official added.

The single-storey dance hall was crowded with people relaxing for the weekend.

The manager, an entrepreneur who rented the building from a local government work unit, was not hurt in the blaze, and was taken into custody for investigation, officials said.

Officials declined to reveal further details.

Chinese businessmen in search of quick profits are hampering government attempts to improve fire safety standards amid a construction frenzy sparked by rapid economic growth in recent years, the Fire Fighting Bureau spokesman said.

The fire follows a similar blaze two weeks ago that roared through a nightclub in Jilin, capital of neighbouring northeastern Jilin province, killing two people.

More than 280 city firemen backed by 48 fire engines took three hours to put out the fire in the Yundu Nightclub.

The blaze spread to the Jilin Municipal Museum next door, destroying the fossil of an 11-metre-long, 6.5-metre (21-ft) tall fossil dating back about 70 million years, as well as paintings and calligraphic works of the Ming and Qing dynasties (1568-1911).

The nightclub's owners, the Jilin City No. 1 Construction Company and a Hong Kong investor, had ignored fire department warnings during renovations, the Xinhua News Agency said.

More than 1,300 people were killed and 2,780 injured in 27,236 fires across China in the first nine months of this year, according to official figures, and an official report blamed insufficient prevention measures.

The number of fires that gutted restaurants, hotels and shops had risen from a year earlier. No comparative figures were available.

Norway votes 'no' to EU

OSLO (R) — Norway rejected membership of the European Union (EU) in a referendum Monday, choosing to stay outside the powerful bloc in a bitter defeat for pro-EU Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland.

With 96.6 per cent of votes counted, computer projections said 52.5 per cent of Norway's 3.2-million electorate voted against membership and 47.5 per cent voted in favour.

"We now see there will be a 'no' majority," a visibly upset Ms. Brundtland, who had fought hard to persuade intransigent voters to say "yes," said on Norwegian Television early Tuesday.

The Norwegian crown weakened Tuesday but Finance Minister Sigbjørn Johnsen pledged to continue a steady economic policy and further reduce the state budget deficit.

"This requires that we continue a steady course in our economic policy to prop up confidence in Norway's economy so that we secure the basis for investments and jobs in Norway," Mr. Johnsen said in a statement.

"Norway has said 'no' — again," said a front page headline in daily Aftenposten, alluding to a similar referendum 22 years ago when Norwegians rejected membership of the then European Economic Community by virtually the same margin.

But Norway, by choosing relative isolation now that

neighbouring Sweden and Finland will join the expanding union, "is taking a step into the unknown," the newspaper commented.

"We have placed ourselves on the sidelines of decisions that will affect our country anyway," it said.

Sweden and Finland both voted "yes" in the past six weeks after Austria voted to join the union, which will have 15 members as of Jan. 1.

Newspapers agreed that the "no" vote was a blow to Ms. Brundtland's position as Norway's dominating politician.

"The result of the referendum was a formidable defeat for Brundtland," daily Verdens Gang said. "In the next few days questions are bound to be asked about her personal position."

Ms. Brundtland, who led the campaign to bring Norway into Europe, brushed aside suggestions she might step down as prime minister of the minority Labour government.

She promised to respect the result of the advisory referendum which must be approved by parliament, saying she now faced the tough task of seeking to maintain relations with Norway's main trading partners despite being outside the EU.

Norway's rejection of the EU, long signalled in opinion polls, means it will now join Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland as the only Western European nations outside

the Brussels-based bloc.

Analysis of the results of the two-day referendum showed virtually all Norway — apart from the capital Oslo — had rejected EU membership.

Turnout was a record 88.5 per cent, an indication of how deeply the issue concerned Norwegians, most of whom fear losing their independence and control of oil and fish resources to a distant bureaucracy.

In the Arctic north of Norway, an average of around 80 per cent of voters said a resounding 'no', as did the fishing communities along the sprawling coastline.

Similar anti-EU sentiment was encountered in neighbouring Sweden and Finland during their referenda, but urban communities voted in favour of membership and tipped the balance.

In Norway, pro-EU sentiment in the major centres of Oslo and Bergen was not strong enough to carry the vote.

Anne Enger Lahnstein, dubbed the "no queen" for her battle with Ms. Brundtland to keep Norway out of the EU, told cheering crowds anti-EU sentiment did not mean Norway was anti-European.

"We are European, we are internationally minded. But we are not in favour of union," said Ms. Lahnstein, in a reference to Norway's more than 500 years of one-sided union with Denmark and

Sweden which ended with Norwegian independence in 1905.

Meanwhile, the European Union reacted with disappointment, but not surprise, Tuesday at Norway's "no" to membership, but said the door remained open to Oslo if Norwegian people ever changed their minds.

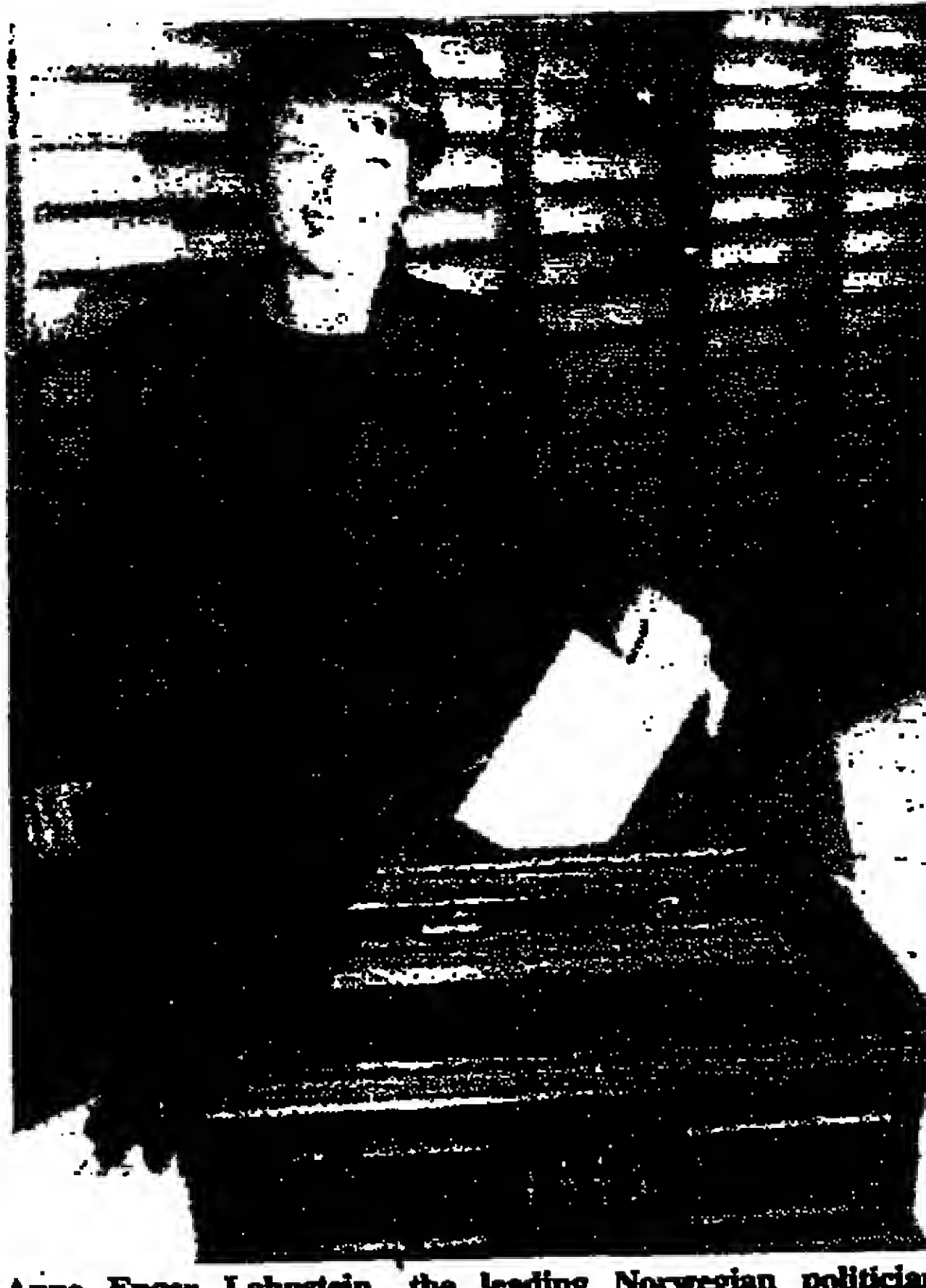
"We are disappointed. Norway could have contributed a lot," European Commission President Jacques Delors told a news conference.

"The door is still open... to our Norwegian friends," he said, adding that the union would wait until after a planned 1996 review of its workings before opening talks with new candidates.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, whose country holds the rotating EU presidency, said he regretted Norway's rejection of European Union membership, but would ensure that the door to the union remained open for Oslo.

"I have noted with regret the rejection of EU membership by the citizens of Norway. Of course the German government respects the sovereign decision of the people of Norway. But the door to the European Union remains open to Norway despite this outcome. Norway will still be welcome in the future," he said.

"I will therefore work towards further developing the relationship between a united



Anne Enger Lahnstein, the leading Norwegian politician against EU membership, casts her vote in Troekstad (AFP photo)

Europe and Norway in order to keep Norway's path to the European Union open," he added.

France, which takes over the EU's rotating presidency on Jan. 1 — the day Austria, Finland and Sweden are due to join — played down the vote saying Norway would

now have to live in the shadow of the group without having a say in its running.

"The Norwegian people are running the risk of living next to a huge economic group whose rules they will have to respect without having a say in how they are established," European Affairs Minister Alain Lamassoure said.

British peer comes riding to Major's rescue

LONDON (R) — A British aristocrat renounced his peerage to help out beleaguered Prime Minister John Major in a crucial vote of confidence on payments to Europe. James Douglas-Hamilton, a member of the House of Commons and a junior minister in Mr. Major's government, became a peer when his uncle, the Earl of Selkirk, died last Thursday. But under British law, a peer with a right to sit in the (upper) House of Lords cannot vote or sit in the (lower) House of Commons. With a slim majority of 14, Mr. Major needed all the support he could find in a Commons vote on increased contributions to the European Union budget after several rebellious members of his ruling Conservative Party threatened to oppose him. Mr. Douglas-Hamilton told a news conference Monday he had renounced the title, allowing him to return to the chamber. "This is a matter of principle," Mr. Douglas-Hamilton said, explaining he was driven by a duty to the Conservative Party, to the people who voted him into office and to Mr. Major.

Uffizi Gallery still under repair after blast

FLORENCE (R) — The Uffizi Gallery, severely damaged in a bomb attack that killed five people and injured 50 in 1993, will not fully reopen until December 1995, its director said Tuesday. Anna Maria Petrioli also said the bombing, which police have blamed on the mafia, had caused more damage to artworks than first thought. The Uffizi, home to the world's most precious collection of Renaissance art was closed after the attack. Parts of it reopened a month later after round-the-clock restoration work and the West Corridor had been due to reopen early in 1995. Four of the corridor's rooms with masterpieces by Michelangelo and Titorelli are already open to the public but others will remain closed until December next year, Ms. Petrioli told a news conference. Ms. Petrioli, who Monday unveiled the first sculpture to be restored after the bombing, said damage to the museum's art works had been underestimated. In the wake of the attack, museum officials said three at works had been destroyed and 30 damaged. But Ms. Petrioli said at least 150 paintings and 50 sculptures had suffered varying degrees of damage. The restored statue, of Alexander the Great, had its head and torso severed when 200 kilos (440 lbs) of explosives packed into a stolen van exploded on a street behind the 400-year-old Uffizi in May 1993.

Paris Match launches Japanese edition

TOKYO (AFP) — Paris Match's first Japanese edition hit Tokyo newsstands with a print run of 250,000 featuring — like its French counterpart — supermodel Claudia Schiffer on its cover. Paris Match Japan, which is almost entirely a direct translation of the Paris edition, will initially appear every three months, but will become a monthly if the experiment is successful, editor in chief Patrick Mahe said. Distributed by Hachette in Japan, Paris Match Japan, which like its parent is a weekly photo magazine focusing on celebrities, hopes to follow the successful launch of Elle Japan, which also prints around 250,000 copies. In a country almost obsessed with French luxury goods, the advertisers in the first edition included Lanvin, Van Cleef Arpels, Yves Saint Laurent, Lancome, Hermes and Cartier.

Art-world figures arrested over Chagall thefts

PARIS (AFP) — Three French art-world figures have been arrested in connection with the theft of some 50 paintings from the estate of Russian-born master Marc Chagall, who died in 1985, officials said Monday. The three are alleged to have been accomplices of the artist's former governess Irene Menskoi, whom they persuaded to steal the canvases following Chagall's death at the age of 99. They are accused of having used pseudonyms to sell at least 40 of the gouache paintings on the international art market, where they fetched some \$10 million.

Mine kills 7 policemen, misses Indian minister

NEW DELHI (R) — Maoist guerrillas killed nine people including seven policemen with a landmine in southern India Tuesday but missed a state minister they were targeting, a police official said.

He said the guerrillas of the People's War Group (PWG) detonated the mine when the lorry carrying the policemen approached a culvert on the outskirts of Warangal town, a Maoist stronghold in Andhra Pradesh state.

The lorry driver and his son were also killed. "They were aiming at Mr. Narasimha Reddy who was following the lorry in a separate car," the police official, heading the anti-Maoist campaign in Andhra Pradesh, told Reuters by phone from the state capital Hyderabad.

Mr. Reddy, a staunchly anti-Maoist minister in the state government ruled by Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's Congress Party, is a candidate from Warangal for the Dec. 1 and 5 assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh.

"Mr. Reddy was on top of the PWG's hit-list," said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The PWG has controlled vast tracts of forest straddling Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra states for more than 25 years.

The group has called for a boycott of the state elections in Andhra Pradesh. Police have reported mine blasts at the homes and offices of

several Congress sympathisers as part of the anti-poll campaign.

The PWG Saturday killed five top commandos of the Punjab police and two civilians when they blew up a tractor with a landmine in Karminagar district next to Warangal, the police official said.

Police retaliated Sunday by killing six suspected Maoists, five in Karminagar and one in Warangal.

Earlier reports saying 16 policemen were killed in Saturday's blast were wrong, the police official said. "There was a communication problem with the local police," he explained.

Andhra Pradesh police say they avoid using vehicles for fear of getting blown up by guerrilla landmines. "I prefer a motorcycle if I cannot walk," Warangal's top police official Sudeep Lakhtakia told Reuters last week.

The state police are worried, however, that most of some 20,000 paramilitary troops sent this month to the Maoist stronghold are not familiar with the terrain.

Meanwhile an official report said Tuesday Pakistanis and Afghans top the number of foreign mercenaries fighting Indian rule in the disputed state of Kashmir.

The figures, released in the state winter capital Jammu, said 222 foreign Islamic rebels had been killed in clashes with Indian security forces between 1989 and October 1994, of whom 97 were Pakistanis and 89 Afghans.

Australia military aid to Cambodia prompts warning

CANBERRA (R) — Australia said Tuesday it would more than double its annual military aid to Cambodia to Australia dollar 8 million (\$6 million), adding that the increased aid is likely to make its citizens targets for Khmer Rouge guerrillas.

But officials stressed the new military aid emphasises training and does not provide for weaponry.

"The package does not include the provision of lethal material," Foreign Minister Gareth Evans and Defence Minister Robert Ray said in a joint statement to the Senate, the upper house of parliament.

The increased military aid prompted Australia to release an update of its security assessment on Cambodia Tuesday.

"There will likely be a parallel increase in the risk to Australian civilians who live permanently, or undertake necessary periodic travel, outside Phnom Penh," the assessment report said.

The Khmer Rouge has warned it will target Australians if their government continues to militarily support the Phnom Penh government.

Canberra came under domestic pressure to increase its military aid to Cambodia

following the murders of two Australian tourists by their Khmer Rouge captors this year.

The Khmer Rouge have killed six Western hostages this year.

Cambodia's defence minister has said the Khmer Rouge could be wiped out within three years if foreign governments provided Phnom Penh with arms and training.

But Cambodia's neighbour Thailand has warned against giving arms to the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) on grounds the weapons could fall into the hands of Khmer Rouge guerrillas.

"The additional defence assistance will focus specifically on training," Mr. Evans and Mr. Ray said.

"No Australian personnel will be involved in any support or advisory role during RCAF combat operations," Mr. Evans rejected comparisons with the Vietnam War, where the initial involvement of U.S. military advisors turned into full-scale military commitment.

"This is not a full-scale war," Mr. Evans told a news conference. "This is a comparatively small-scale insurgency situation in which the government needs to be assisted."

Angolan peace commission meeting postponed

LUANDA (R) — Angola's state radio announced postponement of a peace commission meeting Tuesday, while aid sources said they had heard reports of isolated fighting in central areas over the weekend despite a ceasefire.

"A meeting of the joint commission has been postponed," the radio said. It gave no new date for the commission's first session since the government and UNITA rebels signed a peace accord in the Zambian capital Lusaka on Nov. 20.

The Joint Political and Military Commission was established to oversee implementation of the accord to end 19 years of civil war that has devastated the country of 10 million people.

The delegation from Jonas Savimbi's National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) to the commission failed to arrive in Luanda as planned Monday.

International aid sources in Luanda said Tuesday they had heard isolated reports of fighting in central Angola at the weekend despite a nation-wide ceasefire that went into effect on Nov. 22.

The sources said unidentified people Sunday attacked the town of Balombo, about 130 kilometres east of the Atlantic Ocean port of Lobito.

They said they had also heard of fighting Sunday near the central city of Huambo, the former UNITA stronghold captured by government forces in an offensive nearly three weeks ago.

Other aid sources said they had heard "confused reports" of fighting at two towns near Huambo.

Sanguinetti wins Uruguay presidency

MONTEVIDEO (R) — Former President Julio Sanguinetti of the centrist Colorado Party was returned to power by a narrow margin and said Monday he will put regional free trade at the top of his agenda.

"Our movement's electoral strength is what allowed us to achieve this result which puts us again in the presidency," said Mr. Sanguinetti, 58, who was the first elected leader when the military held elections in 1984.

Russian official hails new ties with Japan

TOKYO (R) — Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets, with economic deals in his pocket to take home, forecast Tuesday a new and brighter era of relations with Japan.

Mr. Soskovets, the highest-ranking Russian official to visit Japan since President Boris Yeltsin in October 1993, said the two countries were entering an era of "balanced expansion."

"Through my talks with (Prime Minister) Murayama and (Foreign Minister) Kono I was able to gain confidence that Russo-Japanese relations will develop into one of true partnership," Mr. Soskovets told a news conference at the end of a three-day stay in Tokyo.

He said the most important pact was one to establish a bilateral committee on trade and economic affairs on the deputy-premier level, modeled on a U.S.-Russia body headed by Vice President Al Gore and Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin.

"This means our countries can approach trade and economic matters in a systematic manner," Mr. Soskovets said.

Mr. Soskovets also won agreements on Japan's support for Russia's economic reforms, Russia's entry into

the world trade organisation, and rescheduling of Moscow's debts.

Japanese leaders also told him they might consider enlarging a \$400 million loan from the Japan Export-Import Bank for industrial projects to turn armaments factories into non-military plants.

On Monday, Japan's Trade Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto gave Mr. Soskovets a set of plans to support Russian industries.

With the plans, it hopes to help promote Russian exports, especially in the energy industry.

Mr. Hashimoto also promised Mr. Soskovets that the ministry would reopen talks on a \$700 million loan for Russia's biggest oil firm Lukoil, the officials said.

The latest package of economic deals represents Tokyo's first tangible move towards stepped economic ties with Moscow since Japan abandoned its long-standing policy of refusing economic assistance without the return of islands claimed by both nations.

The new policy was adopted after Mr. Yeltsin's visit last year.

In return for the latest package, Japanese Prime Minister Tomichi Murayama

and Foreign Minister Yohei Kono received assurances that Moscow would not drop moves to resolve the thorny territorial issue between the two countries.

The islands off northern Japan — Kunashiri, Etorofu, Shikotan and the Habomai Group — were seized by Soviet troops at the end of World War II. Russia refers to them as the South Kurile Islands while Japan regards them as its Northern Territories.

"We have agreed to resolve this (territorial issue) on the basis of law and justice, but both sides must be very patient," Mr. Soskovets said.

He also agreed to start negotiations for a fisheries pact covering the disputed islands, following a recent series of shooting incidents by Russian troops on Japanese fishing boats.

Mr. Soskovets said potential Japanese investors need not worry about Russia's domestic political and economic woes. "In three to five years, our situation will become very stable," he said.

The two governments issued a joint press statement in which they stressed they would pursue a policy of "balanced expansion" in both political and economic sectors.

Taiwan's big polls debate: Sweet potato or taro

TAIPEI (R) — The biggest issues in Taiwan's elections this weekend are rooted in people's differing attitude to two types of vegetable — the sweet potato and the taro.

The sweet potato, which is shaped like a map of Taiwan, signifies people native to this island. The taro is an impolite nickname for those who fled here from mainland China around 1949.

Mainlander or Taiwanese? Reunification with China or independence from it? These key questions have been particularly vexing to the ruling Nationalist Party as it prepares for Dec. 3 and its biggest electoral test since taking power in Taiwan at the end of Japanese colonial rule in 1945.

The native Taiwanese majority, which for decades of Nationalist rule were viewed as a lower class and had their language banned from public meetings, are now finding themselves the ones wooed in a changing political order.

Incumbent Governor James Soong, a mainland and leading member of the Nationalists which kept native Taiwanese culture under wraps, has had to learn the Taiwanese dialect in an attempt to win votes.

But speaking only haltingly, he has employed a native Taiwanese comedian with a low routine to enliven his ticket and win the hearts of the Taiwanese working class.

The post of governor is the most senior to face election in Taiwan, an island of 21 million people which began democratic reform after lifting martial law in 1987.

People will also choose the mayors of the two biggest cities, Taipei and Kaohsiung, as well as provincial assemblymen and city councillors.

"People who are in Taiwan are Taiwanese, no matter whether they eat taros or sweet potatoes," President Lee Teng-hui, who is also chairman of the Nationalist Party, told a rally in support

of Governor Soong.

But the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) have sought to embarrass the Nationalists by drawing attention to the fact that their roots lie in mainland China.

In parliament this month, a DPP legislator approached Nationalist Premier Lien Chan holding a sweet potato in one hand and a taro in the other.

"Choose one, choose one," taunted Chou Po-Lun. Mr. Lien said there was no difference between them and refused to choose.

On the issue of independence or reunification with China, the ruling party has drawn criticism from both the DPP which opposes the Nationalists' stated aim of reunification, and from the New Party which says the Nationalists are insincere.

Independence is a sensitive issue, especially because China has said it may use military force to retake Taiwan if the

island declares independence.

"Bravely cry out the name of your motherland — Taiwan," about 50,000 supporters shouted at a DPP rally in Taipei this month.

The New Party accuses President Lee of having a secret agenda to pursue independence while professing a desire for reunification.

Saturday's elections will not decide these issues because top government leaders are not facing a vote. But the polls could give a valuable pointer on the sentiment of the Taiwanese people.

Candidates are debating the identity of Taiwanese or Chinese but not public policy. The voters are the same," said Hu Fo, professor of politics at National Taiwan University and a veteran election observer.

"Taiwan's identity has been ambiguous in the past and is becoming a crisis question which seems to outweigh everything at these elections," he added.



Chechen soldiers (left) and (right) guard POWs said to be Russian army soldiers next to an APC in the village of Asinovka at the Chechen-Russian border. The Chechen government announced that they recently have captured

some 70 Russian soldiers while the Russian Defence Ministry officially denied any military presence in Chechnya, saying that the fighters claiming to be "Russian soldiers" must be mercenaries (AFP photo)

Chechens down 3 attacking aircraft in Grozny

GROZNY, Russia (AFP) — Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev's forces downed a fighter plane and two helicopters Tuesday after he rejected an ultimatum to submit to Russian rule, a government spokesman said.

Six Sukhoi-27 planes and four helicopters strafed the presidential palace, then attacked the airport, spokesman Udogov Movladi said. The plane and two helicopters were downed with U.S.-made Stinger missiles, he said.

The airport attack killed 10 people, all civilians, Interfax quoted airport chief Ramzan Aliyev, as saying. He said between six and eight planes bombed the airport, destroying the terminal.

Only one column of smoke, apparently from a crashed aircraft, could be seen rising from the city.

At the airport, a fuel reservoir was on fire and the runway was pitted with rocket craters. Two civilian Tupolev-134 planes were destroyed and Mr. Dudayev's personal Tupolev-134 was on fire.

In Moscow, Russian authorities said no Russian military planes had even taken off in the northern Caucasus Friday.

President Yeltsin, at an emergency Kremlin-Security Council meeting, said Tuesday Chechnya is part of the Russian Federation and Moscow cannot stand idle during the ongoing fighting in the separatist republic.

"Bearing in mind that Chechnya is a republic of the Russian Federation, we cannot stay aside from the bloodshed," Mr. Yeltsin was quoted as saying by the ITAR-TASS agency as he

opened the meeting.

"Today we must take a final decision on the situation in Chechnya," he said.

Mr. Yeltsin early Tuesday ordered the warring parties in Chechnya to declare a ceasefire within 48 hours or face "all the forces and means at the disposal," of Russia "to restore constitutional legality."

The separatist government of President Dudayev is battling Russian-backed rebels in the tiny, oil-rich Caucasus republic.

The top government brass attended the Kremlin meeting, including Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, Defence Minister Pavel Grachev, Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and Interior Minister Viktor Yerin.

Also there were secret service chief Sergei Stepashin and the speakers of the lower and upper houses of parliament, Ivan Rybkin and Vladimir Shumeiko.

Mr. Dudayev rejected Moscow's ultimatum to submit to Russian rule or face a crackdown Tuesday.

"Russia has not got the right to declare a state of emergency in Chechnya," he told reporters.

Earlier, Chechnya's Foreign Minister Yusuf Shamshudin said authorities "totally reject" the Russian ultimatum. "We will fight until the last drop of blood. Chechnya will never return to Russia," he said in a statement to journalists.

He also warned that Russia will "have another Afghanistan on its hands" if Russian President Boris Yeltsin follows through with his threat to declare a state of emergency and deploy troops in Chechnya if his demands

were not met.

Chechnya has refused to sign a treaty making the republic part of the Russian Federation and President Dudayev — a former Soviet Air Force general and veteran of Russia's intervention in Afghanistan — unilaterally declared Chechnya independent in 1991.

The foreign minister, calling Mr. Yeltsin "drunk" and "crazy," said he had discussed the Russian ultimatum with Mr. Dudayev.

"I think Yeltsin was drunk when he issued the ultimatum," he said.

He said Russia last sent soldiers to Chechnya three years ago, after its independence proclamation. "We captured them all and sent them home without their weapons," he said. "If he tries this again, the same thing will happen."

Mr. Yeltsin "must understand that if he starts, he will have another Afghanistan in Chechnya and across all the Caucasus."

"The Russian Federation is finished," he said.

The commander of Russian Interior Ministry troops said Tuesday security measures at nuclear power stations and other strategic installations had been stepped up to prevent possible terrorist attacks by Chechen militants.

The official ITAR-TASS news agency quoted Colonel-General Anatoly Kulikov as saying he "did not exclude the possibility of terrorist acts by Chechen militants" and added: "He is especially concerned over nuclear power stations and other strategic objectives."

"According to Anatoly Kulikov, Interior Ministry

troops have stepped up guarding of strategic objectives after the aggravation of the situation in Chechnya," TASS said.

Powerful gangs of Chechen mobsters are among the most feared criminals in Moscow and authorities in the Russian capital have not ruled out the possibility of terrorist attacks.

Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev said President Yeltsin bore some blame for the fighting raging in Chechnya Republic, since he had encouraged autonomous republics to push for sovereignty during the Soviet break-up.

"The bloody events in Chechnya are only a time bomb that was destined to explode after the break-up of the Soviet Union," Mr. Gorbachev said Tuesday at a ceremony to present a new book calling for reconstruction of the Soviet Union.

The book, published by the Gorbachev Foundation, is entitled *The Union Should Have Been Preserved*.

Several times before the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Mr. Yeltsin had appealed to Russia's autonomous regions and republics to "take all the sovereignty you want."

At the time, Mr. Gorbachev had warned such advice would "drive the notion of sovereignty to an absurd level, and lead to separatism even within Russia," according to the book presented here Tuesday.

"Tensions that existed in the Soviet days have turned into wars, and the leadership of the country will not manage to resolve this situation which threatens to keep getting worse," Mr. Gorbachev said.

Serbs threaten U.N.; keep up assault on Bihac enclave

SARAJEVO (R) — Serb forces issued fresh threats against U.N. peacekeepers Tuesday and kept up an assault on the Bosnian enclave of Bihac, flouting U.N. authority and exploiting divisions among the major powers.

The Bosnian Serb Army (BSA), stepping up pressure on the U.N. Peacekeeping Force, warned it will shell Canadian U.N. soldiers at their base in central Bosnia, a United Nations spokesman said.

"The BSA threatened they would shell the base sometime within the next 48 hours," said Major Koos Sol in Sarajevo. "All non-essential personnel have been evacuated from the base. There has been no attack so far but we're taking every precaution."

Serbs have shelled the U.N. base in Visoko twice in the past week, where some 800 Canadian soldiers are deployed 64 kilometres northwest of Sarajevo.

The Serbs have detained some 400 peacekeepers in Bosnia in retaliation for NATO air strikes on Serb targets last week.

Serb authorities had pledged to release Tuesday a group of British and French soldiers in four U.N. convoys in eastern Bosnia but BSA Commander General Ratko Mladic blocked the release, U.N. sources said.

Gen. Mladic's forces were on a victorious roll in the Muslim enclave of Bihac, unchallenged by U.N. officials who had virtually ruled out NATO air strikes to protect the U.N. "safe area" of Bihac town.

Fighting continued in the suburbs of Bihac Monday and "the situation remained

grave," said U.N. spokesman Colonel Jan-Drik Merveldt. Supplies of basic foods were running low and most of the Bihac region had no gas or electricity, U.N. aid workers said.

In the north of the enclave, the government army 5th Corps was reeling from attacks by rebel Muslim troops allied with Serb forces in the town of Velika Kladusa.

Heavy fighting was reported inside Velika Kladusa and U.N. sources said the Bosnian army could lose the town to rebel Muslims within 48 hours.

The fall of Velika Kladusa would open the way for rebel Muslim forces to press south and engage the government 5th Corps defending Bihac town from the rear and enter the town instead of the Serbs, military analysts said in Belgrade.

The belief that was one of the reasons why the Serbs have not yet entered Bihac when they could have done so days ago.

United Nations officials were pushing for a local ceasefire and demilitarised zone in Bihac.

The Muslim-led Bosnian government, faced with imminent defeat in Bihac, have accepted that idea but the Bosnian Serbs have postponed their response, Bosnian Serb sources said.

The 5th Corps defending Bihac town vowed to hold out as Serb forces delayed their response to the U.N. ceasefire call for a second day.

"We expect infantry attacks to ensue very soon, mostly from the south, southwest from the city... we expect heavy fighting today, but we are not going to give in,"

5th Corps spokesman Damir Midzic told Reuters. "We will fight to the very end."

The United Nations proposal would have combatants withdraw from Bihac town and leave its administration to the U.N. forces.

Scrambling to avoid total collapse of the U.N. peace effort, the United Nations announced its secretary-general planned to visit Sarajevo Wednesday.

Boutros Ghali was to meet Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic and Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic in a push for local ceasefire.

Dr. Ghali will go to Sarajevo with "rock-bottom conditions" for the continuation of the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Bosnia, a senior U.N. official said in Zagreb.

"These are extremely critical days for UNPROFOR (U.N. Protection Force)," Michael Williams told a news conference, but added: "We are not at the stage of ultimatums yet."

The debacle of the government forces has caused deep policy differences over former Yugoslavia to burst into the open.

U.S. Senate Republican leader Bob Dole, who has blamed European inaction in Bosnia for the "complete collapse" of the Atlantic alliance, arrived in Brussels Tuesday to meet NATO officials to press home his views.

Sen. Dole set off a new controversy with NATO allies Sunday by accusing France and particularly Britain of urging the U.N. to veto U.S. calls for NATO air strikes against Bosnian Serbs.

Envoys of the so-called contact group countries — the United States, Russia, Britain, France and Germany — visited Sarajevo Tuesday

after meeting Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia Monday to try to salvage peace efforts.

Diplomats said the contact group mission carried details of major incentives to Mr. Milosevic and the Bosnian Serbs to cooperate.

They reportedly offered the Bosnian Serbs the right to confederation with Serbian-led Yugoslavia in return for accepting a big power peace plan they rejected in August.

A U.S. diplomat denied Tuesday that major powers negotiating an end to the war in Bosnia would allow Bosnian Serbs the right to have confederal links to Serbian-led Yugoslavia.

"I know there have been rumours about the changes in the peace plan. Those are not true. We stick to the plan," said Charles Thomas, the U.S. envoy in the five-nation "contact group" which has drawn up a peace plan to try to halt the 32-month-old war.

Mr. Thomas spoke after contact group envoys held talks with the Muslim-led Bosnian government in Sarajevo, which has backed the group's peace proposals.

The contact group plan would divide Bosnia roughly in half between the Serbs and a federation of Muslims and Croats. Bosnian Serb leaders have rejected the plan.

"We insist that the map be accepted and we believe this is a viable plan to achieve peace in this part of the world," Mr. Thomas said.

Diplomatic sources in Paris had said earlier that Washington had softened its stance and had offered the Bosnian Serbs the right to form a confederation with neighbouring rump Yugoslavia, comprised of Serbia and Montenegro.

Nepal gets 1st Communist premier

KATHMANDU (AFP) — Manu Mohan Adhikari, 74, Tuesday became Nepal's first Communist premier when King Birendra appointed him to head a minority government after elections resulted in a hung parliament.

Mr. Adhikari, chairman and parliamentary leader of the Nepal Communist Party-United Marxist and Leninist (NCP-UML), was named prime minister after a meeting with the monarch late Tuesday.

Elections two weeks ago failed to throw up a single winner and protracted haggling did not result in creating either a majority coalition or an anti-Communist alliance among opposition groups.

The NCP-UML won 88 seats in mid-term elections, 15 less than the minimum needed to command a parliamentary majority.

A minority government became inevitable after talks with the former ruling party, the Nepali Congress (NC), failed to find an alliance. The Congress, which won 83 seats, and rightwing Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) also could not agree on a coalition to keep out the Communists.

Mr. Adhikari will be sworn in Wednesday at the royal palace.

In addition to the premiership, he will also hold the defence portfolio and take charge of palace affairs, party sources said.

Mr. Adhikari has promised to pursue free market policies and not be "self-centred." He said he will pursue liberal economic policies, apart from abolishing a wealth tax initiated by the NC that caused a lot of anger.

Many people said they did not vote in order to defeat the Mr. Koirala government because of its apparent inability to manage the bureaucracy and past programmes.

NCP-UML General Secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal was expected to be deputy prime minister and foreign minister. Mr. Nepal held talks Monday with King Birendra on policy proposals.

"I put forward the views of our party on different aspects with the king in a cordial atmosphere," said Mr. Nepal.

The formation of a Communist-led cabinet came one step closer to realisation when the NC Monday announced its inability to patch together a coalition government with a rightist party.

Quayle hospitalised for blood clot in lung

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Former Vice President Dan Quayle was in stable condition Tuesday with a life-threatening blood clot in one lung, weeks before he was expected to announce a run for the White House.

Mr. Quayle, 47, was admitted to University Hospital Monday evening after experiencing shortness of breath at home, hospital spokeswoman Pam Perry said. His wife, Marilyn, was

with him in the hospital.

"It's critical that he was treated," Ms. Perry said. "A team of physicians determined he had a clot that travelled to his lung."

Doctors expect he'll recover completely, but he's expected to remain in the hospital for about a week, she said.

The clot constituted a life-threatening emergency, she said, noting that it could interfere with respiration.

Ms. Perry did not know which lung the clot was in, what caused the clot, or if Mr. Quayle has a history of heart or circulation problems.

He was diagnosed with walking pneumonia Sunday at the hospital's emergency room.

Mr. Quayle was deemed in excellent condition after a physical examination in 1989, the year he began his four-year term as vice president.

Elite police force to take over in Karachi

KARACHI, Pakistan (R) — Karachi's deputy police chief said Tuesday that 1,000 army-trained policemen would deploy in the southern Pakistani city this week after troops end their 29-month-old campaign to stamp out lawlessness.

Deputy Inspector General Iqbal said half of the total elite force of 2,000 would move into the troubled port city initially. Their com-

rades would deploy later "if need be."

"They are as good as the commandos of the Pakistan army," Mr. Iqbal told Reuters in an interview.

Troops sent in to curb crime and violence in June 1992 are being pulled out, leaving police and paramilitaries in charge.

The troops' mandate for operation clean-up expires on Dec. 31 but soldiers are due

to return to their barracks in the Malir cantonment area by midnight Wednesday.

Witnesses say soldiers have already left most of the posts they had been manning but some remain in eastern Karachi's Korangi district, a flashpoint for factional violence.

More than 560 people have been shot dead and 700 wounded in Karachi this year.

Russia wants 'negotiations' on NATO's move East

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russia warned Tuesday ahead of key talks on European security, against any move which could foster a new division of Europe, saying "negotiations" were needed on NATO's plans to expand to the East.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Krylov said there must be "negotiations, talks, explanations on positions" prior to any NATO expansion into the old Eastern Bloc.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) foreign ministers are scheduled to discuss the issue at a meeting in Brussels Thursday that will be dominated by European security topics, notably the

war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The issue of expanding NATO will also be raised at a meeting Friday by foreign ministers from member countries of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, the body coordinating East-West security matters.

Russia "is not against membership of certain countries in NATO," he said. But "it is not possible to broaden the Alliance in such a way that Europe will again be divided, with certain countries members (of NATO) and others thrown to the side," he said.

Before expanding NATO, it is "necessary to thoroughly explore" the Partnership for Peace programme — the

NATO initiative launched last January to promote military cooperation with former Warsaw Pact countries but stops short of giving them the full membership which some Eastern Bloc countries have been pressing for.

Since then, 23 countries including Russia have signed up for the Partnership for Peace programme but some potential members have balked at the slow pace of NATO expansion.

Some senior diplomats in Brussels meanwhile have raised doubts about its actual implementation, saying it looked more and more like an "idea on paper" and had not yet been included in NATO's budget.

Moscow — which has been wary of the programme — wants instead to give priority to strengthening the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which already includes NATO members and former Warsaw Pact members. This is to be discussed at a CSCE summit in Dec. 5 and 6 in Budapest.

Mr. Krylov said the United States — which is to offer ideas at this summit for boosting the CSCE's role as a forum for peacekeeping and conflict resolution — was proposing only "rather cosmetic" changes, while Russia wants the CSCE thoroughly revamped.

N. Korea, U.S. to hold nuclear talks in China

BEIJING (R) — North Korean negotiators flew into Beijing Tuesday for talks with U.S. officials on averting any nuclear threats from the North.

"U.S. and DPRK (North Korea) experts will meet in Beijing beginning on Nov. 30 for preliminary discussions on the light-water reactor project," a U.S. embassy spokesman said.

He said he expected the meetings to go on for two to three days but declined to give further details.

An official at the North Korean embassy in Beijing said a team of 10 experts had arrived from Pyongyang Tuesday for the talks but refused to give more information.

The talks, on putting Pyongyang's promised non-threatening nuclear programme into practice, were expected to take place at the North Korean embassy. But officials on both sides refused

to comment. The United States and North Korea signed an accord in Geneva last month, under which Pyongyang agreed to freeze its nuclear programme in return for Western help and cash to build light-water reactors which produce less of the plutonium that can be used to make nuclear arms.

Washington and its allies suspected that North Korea had syphoned off nuclear fuel from its one working reactor in Yongbyon to try to develop an atomic bomb.

On Monday, the United Nations atomic safeguards agency said North Korea has halted its nuclear programme and stopped building the two nuclear reactors in accordance with its landmark accord with the United States.

The International Atomic Energy (IAEA) said inspectors who arrived in North Korea last week had visited atomic sites in the communist

state and confirmed all work had come to a halt.

The inspectors left Pyongyang for Beijing Tuesday. "The IAEA team visited the nuclear facilities in Yongbyon and Taechon and confirmed that these facilities were not in operation and that construction work had stopped," the IAEA said in a statement.

Pyongyang has stopped operations at its five-megawatt nuclear reactor, a reprocessing plant and a fuel fabrication unit. It has also halted construction of a 50-megawatt reactor at Yongbyon and a 200-megawatt plant in Taechon.

The IAEA, charged with policing compliance with the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, has said it would like a permanent presence in North Korea until the light-water reactors are built in about eight, eight years time.

Pressure from the West

and the IAEA earlier this year provoked one of the most serious military standoffs on the Korean peninsula since the 1950-53 Korean War. The accord defused the crisis.

Under the agreement, the United States pledged to set up an international consortium with Japan and South Korea to help pay for the estimated \$4 billion operation.

Apart from building the new reactors and dismantling North Korea's graphite moderated and plutonium-producing plants, the consortium will pay for oil and other energy supplies until the new plants are plugged into the electricity grid.

Meanwhile Japan's ruling coalition Tuesday dropped plans to send a mission to North Korea this week after receiving negative signals from Pyongyang about the visit.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

Chairman of the Board of Directors: MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General: MOHAMMAD AMAD

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Editorial and advertising offices: Jordan Press Foundation, University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.

Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

Journalists or criminals: What is the law?

THE ARREST and criminal charging earlier this week of Abdul Rahman Aboushi, the editor of the local tabloid *Al Rasif*, over the publication of "false information," and later his release on bail, brings to light once again one of the main ignominious features of the current law on press and publications. What had set the criminal proceedings in motion against *Al Rasif* weekly was the publication of an unsubstantiated report that a certain doctor had performed surgery on a patient, which resulted in his paralysis. The issue here is not solely whether the surgeon in question had been libelled and his professional reputation sullied. Had this been the sole concern, there would have been other legal avenues available for the complainant to pursue in a court of law. What is most disturbing in this and similar cases is the existing law or practice that permits criminal prosecutions in situations where civil complaints would or should do the job.

Since Jordan is now aspiring to become a full-fledged member of the democratic club, it is high time that we applied the minimum requirements needed to join, especially in matters that concern freedom of the press. There is no democratic country on earth, that we know of, which allows criminal prosecution of editors or reporters of publications for allegedly reporting incorrect news items. Criminal proceedings are confined to when there is a prima facie case for criminal intent, as it is known that democratic countries seldom resort to this avenue unless it is absolutely necessary. In the case at bar, the norm is to have the aggrieved party challenge the veracity of the report in a civil proceeding and ask for compensation from the responsible newspaper commensurate with the damage that ensued after proving the falsehood of the report. This is the "civilised" manner of dealing with such a problem.

We cannot, as a democratic state, go around arresting chief editors of publications or their reporters for publishing allegedly false information, especially when we are doing so on a mere suspicion and without the benefit of proving the accusation in an appropriate court of law. If our laws are at fault for this clearly undemocratic practice then we have to take into serious consideration their amendment, and as soon as possible. Otherwise we would simply make a mockery of our democratic hopes.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL DUSTOUR daily decried what it called the world community's condoning of the massacres committed by the Serbs against the Muslims in Bosnia. Nations which brag about respect for human rights are witnessing the aggressors' using all forms of weapons and brutalities against the Bosnian civilians and watching the human tragedy without lifting a finger to help the helpless people, said the daily. The paper said that the Serbian aggression continues despite the presence of 18,000 U.N. troops who are supposed to prevent hostilities, something which prompts one to question the reason for the U.N. presence there and whether these U.N. troops are colluding with the Serbian forces. The U.N. Security Council has in vain declared parts of Bosnia as security zones and instructed the U.N. troops to carry out the order and protect the civilian population; regrettable, by the Serbian aggression is continuing in total disregard to the council's orders and in flagrant violation of all U.N. and international rules, added the paper. The paper expressed dismay at the impotence of the Islamic World for failing to come to the aid of their Muslim brothers and for failing to exercise successful diplomatic efforts to end the Bosnian people's tragedy. It is regrettable, said the paper, that 1,000 million Muslims are unable to do anything to save the innocent lives of the Bosnian population.

FAHD AL FANEK, a columnist in *Al Ra'i*, criticised the 1995 fiscal budget by noting that it provided no articles on ways of repaying Jordan's foreign debts and because it is relying on donor nations to provide five per cent of the budget. The writer said that the figures in the draft budget indicate that the government has been promised JD 390 million in foreign aid in the peace era to help finance the infrastructure and economic ventures, especially in the Jordan Valley, but there are no guarantees that this aid will be forthcoming. The writer said that the budget should have made clear the manner in which the country will handle the foreign debts and the way to make repayment of loans. Faneck said that the very positive element in the 1995 fiscal budget is the fact that the local revenues, estimated at JD 1,400 million, will be sufficient to cover current expenditure 100 per cent, leaving some surplus to cover part of the capital expenditure.

WASHINGTON WATCH

The many storms of 'Senator No'

By Dr. James Zogby

EVEN BEFORE formally assuming the chairmanship of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Republican Senator Jesse Helms has created an unrelenting storm of controversy through his repeated challenges to the Clinton White House.

A hard-line conservative, Mr. Helms has made his mark in Washington as one of the most ardent anti-Communist, anti-"big government," anti-abortion and anti-homosexual, pro-defence and pro-free market politician in the Senate. As such, he is without question the most hated and/or revered senator in Washington, depending upon one's political leaning.

As a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee since his election in 1972, Mr. Helms has almost always placed himself as a member of the opposition. In fact, he has so often taken negative positions on issues (even when Republicans held the White House) that he earned the nickname "Senator No." And as the leading Republican member of the Foreign Relations Committee, he has created serious difficulties for past presidents — Democrat and Republican alike — especially by holding up ambassadorial appointments either because of his personal opposition to the appointee or as part of an effort to force the administration to deal with him on other issues.

On Middle East issues, Mr. Helms has had two distinct phases in his career. From 1972 until the early 1980s he was not considered a friend of Israel. In fact, in a major policy statement issued in 1979, Mr. Helms lashed out against undue U.S. reliance on Israel, and argued that the U.S. had too many interests in the Arab World to maintain an "unbalanced" approach to the region. At the time, analysts considered this Helms Middle East policy statement to be one of the clearest articulations of a Republican business-oriented Middle East position ever issued by a U.S. senator.

But then in the early 1980s, Mr. Helms became a "born again" Christian and recanted his earlier views on the Middle East. Some suggested that Mr. Helms' conversion was fuelled more by the fear of facing a well-funded Democratic opponent in 1984 than fear of God. But regardless of the reason for the conversion it stuck, and since 1984 Mr. Helms has been consistently pro-Israel.

He has been consistently anti-Palestinian (except in the immediate aftermath of the Sept. 13, 1993 signing ceremony). Observers present at the meeting between Mr. Helms and Yasser Arafat noted that Mr. Helms gushed in his support of Mr. Arafat and even asked for his autograph! This, of course, was surprising since Mr. Helms had been a leader in the effort opposing the U.S. dialogue with the PLO. However, Mr. Helms almost never opposed U.S. arms sales to "friendly" Arab states — the one area in which his conduct continued to upset pro-Israel groups in Washington.

No sooner had the Republicans established that they would control the 1995-1996 Senate and its agenda than Mr. Helms left no doubt that he expected to place his mark on U.S. foreign policy.

Within days of the Nov. 8 elections, Mr. Helms' Senate office issued what might be considered the senator's "manifesto" of "actions that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee should take in the next two years." The list begins:

1. The committee must become more aggressive and comprehensive in its oversight responsibilities. We must be more active in ensuring that Department of State and the agencies under the jurisdiction of the Foreign Relations Committee are carrying out their responsibilities as required by law.

2. The requirement for the continued existence of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency as now structured should be evaluated.

3. The structure of the Agency for International Development (AID) will be assessed. Downsizing will be made where appropriate.

4. An evaluation will be made as to why the Foreign Service should be under a different set of personnel rules from all other civilian personnel in the government.

5. In the near future, Cuba is going to be a major foreign policy problem for the United States. We should have a plan of action for the time when Castro departs.

6. The United States' relationship with the United Nations should be reevaluated. The organization (along with the peacekeeping role we have now become so involved with) is costing us billions. A complete assessment should be made.

7. A complete evaluation of existing and proposed treaties should be made. We have been deluged with treaties, many of which are detrimental to the best interests of the United States. This must stop.

8. Aid funding. We have got to reduce foreign aid. We can't afford to give money away, and in the vast majority of cases it has been counterproductive. We should look at the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) as an alternative.

9. Best estimates are that the Camp David accords have cost us \$80-100 billion with no end in sight. Syria does not want peace with Israel. They want the Golan Heights and access to U.S. money. We must have an assessment of the Middle East peace process to know what our commitments are before the fact. Congress must be more involved in what is agreed to before the fact.

10. There are numerous lesser items such as confiscation of property, the role of NATO, appropriateness of U.S. contributions to international financial institutions (World Bank, IADP, European Bank, etc.) that must be assessed.



All of this is consistent with Mr. Helms' world view. He does not trust multilateral approaches to foreign policy. He is an "American First" politician and is distrustful of most international agencies. He is unconvinced that foreign aid plays a positive role in the pursuit of foreign policy objectives. In public remarks since the issuing of the above outline of issues, Mr. Helms went so far as to characterise foreign aid as "American taxpayers' money going down foreign rat holes," and going to "countries that constantly oppose us in the United Nations."

The senator shocked many when he decried the Israel-Syria peace negotiations as a "fraud" and stated his belief that all the Syrians want is "access to the pocketbooks of American taxpayers." And while Mr. Helms has made it clear to pro-Israel lobbyists that U.S. aid to Israel is secure, these same lobbyists worry that by giving Israel such preferential treatment it will create greater public pressure and some public resentment towards Israel.

But it is not Mr. Helms' manifesto or his lack of balance on the Middle East that has caused such a firestorm in Washington; it is the senator's penchant for verbal bomb-throwing.

Immediately after the election, Mr. Helms hinted to the Clinton White House that unless the White House delayed a vote on the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs Treaty (GATT) until next year, the "administration" would get something less than "full and fair" treatment before the Foreign Relations Committee under Helms' leadership. Mr. Helms' long-time opposition to trade agreements that would open U.S. borders to other products puts him at odds with most other Republican leaders, and incoming speaker of the House Newt Gingrich has argued that such a delay would cost the U.S. \$70 billion in trade. But Mr. Helms has kept up his opposition and is working with conservative Democrats to undercut the efforts of both the Democratic and Republican leaderships to pass the treaty this year.

More ominous, however, were Mr. Helms' comments this past week regarding President Clinton in his role as commander-in-chief of the U.S. military. When asked on national television whether he thought Mr. Clinton is "up to the job" of commander-in-chief, Mr. Helms responded: "You ask an honest question; I'll give you an honest answer. No, I do not. And neither do the people in the armed forces." Mr. Helms added that "just about every military man who writes to me" believes that Mr. Clinton is inadequate in that role. When asked whether the Joint Chiefs of Staff held that view, Mr. Helms said simply: "No comment" — implying that at least some in the joint chiefs did hold such a view.

Finally, in an effort to dampen the furore over his commander-in-chief remarks, on Nov. 22, Mr. Helms told a newspaper reporter from his home state of North

Carolina that the president should be careful about visiting military bases in that state. "Mr. Clinton better watch out if he comes down here," Mr. Helms said. "He'd better have a bodyguard." While Mr. Helms later characterised this last remark as a "mistake," he did not apologise for it.

Reaction to Senator Helms' series of post-election remarks have caused some real embarrassment to Republican Party leaders. While most Republican senators are cautious about publicly rebuking a powerful and volatile colleague, they have made every effort to distance themselves from Mr. Helms' remarks.

But the Democrats have not been so tepid in their responses to Mr. Helms' outbursts. Clearly outraged and, at the same time, clearly pleased that Mr. Helms may be shooting his chairmanship of the Foreign Relations Committee in the foot, White House officials have been quick to seize on Mr. Helms' musings. And in the Senate, Democratic Senator Christopher Dodd has been extremely outspoken in his criticism of Mr. Helms' comments. In response to the comment on the danger Mr. Clinton would risk by visiting North Carolina military bases, Mr. Dodd said: "To suggest on his day of all days, Nov. 22 (the 31st anniversary of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy) that an American president's life might be in jeopardy with a visit to an American military base would seem to suggest that Mr. Helms does not know what country he is living in."

And the U.S. military leadership has also been firm in rebuking the senator for his implication that the military would be anything but loyal to the president who, by the authority of the Constitution, serves as commander-in-chief of the U.S. armed forces. General John Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff asserted: "I was taken aback by the implication that Helms left that somehow the Joint Chiefs of Staff and I shared his view on President Clinton. Nothing could be further from the truth..."

In fact, General Shalikashvili went on to describe the full confidence that he and the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have in the president's handling of international hot spots. And in response to Mr. Helms' description of U.S. involvement in Haiti as "a foolish waste," Gen. Shalikashvili responded that it has been a success and has the full support of the U.S. military.

The major U.S. press outlets have also reacted with exceptionally strong criticism to Mr. Helms in the wake of his remarks. In one day, "The New York Times," the "Washington Post," "USA Today" and the "Baltimore Sun," all called on Republicans to remove Mr. Helms from consideration as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

While this will probably not happen, and Mr. Helms will likely assume the chairmanship of the committee, unless he commits an even more embarrassing verbal mistake, it is clear, however, that the lines have been drawn between the senator from North Carolina and the White House in the battle over foreign policy for the next two years.

The president has already firmly stated his own response to Mr. Helms, and his detached and dignified tone will probably be the one he uses for the next two years when he speaks of Mr. Helms. In his comments about the threat from visiting military bases, Mr. Clinton simply said: "I think the remarks were unwise and inappropriate." And Mr. Clinton went on to note that: "The president oversees the foreign policy of the United States, and the Republicans will decide in whom they repose their trust and confidence. That's a decision for them to make, not for me."

But the matter will not end here. The very underpinnings of the Clinton administration's approach to foreign policy will be challenged by Mr. Helms at every stage. He is already demanding an immediate U.S. withdrawal from Haiti, he is opposed to U.S. actions to end the arms embargo on Bosnia, he is opposed to most foreign aid, and opposes U.S. policy everywhere from the efforts to nurture a peace agreement between Israel and Syria to GATT treaty.

The administration will be facing fights on several fronts during the two years: The Whitewater controversy will be rekindled soon, the president's budget proposal will be seriously challenged in Congress and Republicans will attempt to press forward their "Contract with America" in the first 100 days of the next session. But inasmuch as those challenges were expected and can be prepared for, they are simpler than trying to deal with a lone senator who is responsible to neither his party nor the generally accepted manners of Washington. Jesse Helms' unpredictability and his penchant for making irresponsible statements make him something more than a thorn in the side of the administration.

How far will army's 'pacification' go in Burundi

By Nicholas Kotch
Reuters

MUYINGA, Burundi — Burned houses, petrified Hutu villagers and first-hand accounts of brutal reprisals by the military tell the story in the hills of northeast Burundi.

The ethnic army is "pacifying" the population again. They also "clean up" and "disarm" but whatever the euphemism, the result is a campaign of repression aimed at crushing a nascent Hutu armed rebellion before it gets worse.

Foreign aid workers say the army, about 95 per cent of which is believed to be from Burundi's Tutsi minority, is using such brutality that the policy will boomerang.

Ten days ago troops launched a disarmament operation in the hills between Musenyi and Karuzi after shots were fired at a patrol. "We had first-hand reports that about 50 villagers were killed, including children. When the soldiers cannot find suspected rebels they kill or wound the innocent," said a Catholic priest living in the area.

"They are creating an even bigger problem and starting another cycle of hatred and vengeance," he said.

In mid-October, furious soldiers who found no arms or rebels in the village of Bugenyuzi randomly slaughtered 23 civilians in the mar-

ket, relief workers said. "The worst is when the soldiers are drunk and they are drunk pretty often," a senior relief agency source said.

Hundreds of aid workers with U.N. and non-governmental organisations are on the ground helping at least 800,000 refugees and displaced people in Burundi. They dislike what they see but almost all have orders from their head offices not to speak out publicly on the worsening conflict and its strain of gross human rights abuses.

African military observers in a 46-officer mission sent to Burundi last year by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) are mines of information about the security crisis.

So far, the OAU officers' insights remain secret, even though they assess damage and fatalities after the army operations.

The spectre of this year's genocide in Rwanda is partly behind the wall of the silence by international agencies in Burundi. Rwanda's neighbour with the same explosive mix of minority Tutsis and majority Hutus.

Senior aid sources estimate many hundreds of Burundians have been killed in the past few months by the army, by Hutu gunmen or by displaced Tutsi villagers.

At least 50,000 died in ethnic blood-letting after Tutsi army extremists assassinated Melchior Ndadaye, a

Hutu and Burundi's first democratically elected president, in October last year.

By Rwandan standards, the toll is still low and both the government and its foreign advisers fear that any firm measures to debarbarise the Tutsi army will provoke a bloodbath.

In Muyinga, 200 km from the capital Bujumbura, a hand grenade costs only 250 francs (one dollar), residents say. Increasingly, Hutu villagers are buying them as well as modern firearms for protection or to attack isolated army positions.

Burundi's former interior minister, Leonard Nyangoma, has declared war on the army from his exile in Zaire. His claims to have 30,000 Hutus under arms are dismissed as wildly exaggerated but for the first time in Burundi's history of ethnic violence the Hutu majority could become a military threat to the 17,000-strong armed forces.

"It is better to have one army than no army or two armies," said Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, U.N. special representative in Burundi, "because the army is the only guarantee for the Tutsis and ruled the country for so many years, we cannot ignore it. I have to be more practical," he said in an interview.

Mr. Abdallah's pragmatism is shared by many western diplomats. France maintains some 20 military instructors working with the

Simmering Saudi-Qatari tensions surface again

By Youssef Azmeh
Reuters

DUBAI — Simmering tensions between the Gulf Arab state of Qatar and giant neighbour Saudi Arabia came to the surface again this week when the small oil producer boycotted a meeting of a Saudi-dominated regional alliance.

Diplomats in the Gulf said it was too early to say if the new tensions would develop into a full-blown crisis that could rock the 14-year Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) ahead of its annual summit due to be held in Bahrain on Dec. 19.

"I don't think either side would want to see a full crisis," one western diplomat said, adding that they had always stepped back from the brink in the past.

"It is such a sensitive region, I don't think anyone would want to see it destabilised," said another.

Qatar's representative failed to attend the opening of a meeting of GCC interior ministers on Sunday which was to prepare a Gulf-wide security pact for approval by the summit of heads of state of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Qatari officials earlier told the GCC that they were asking for an official Saudi explanation of five incidents this year between Saudi coast guards

and Qatari civilian boats, the London-based newspaper *Al Hayat* reported on Sunday.

Border tensions between Saudi Arabia and Qatar, a peninsula that just into the Gulf like a thumb from the Saudi mainland, threatened to derail a GCC summit two years ago before Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak stepped in to smooth differences.

His intervention was crucial to save the meeting of the show-piece organisation that serves to underline Saudi political and economic dominance of a strategic region that controls 46 per cent of the world's proven reserves of crude oil.

The six states see their solidarity as vital in the face of enemies like Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in the north and historical rivals like non-Arab Iran across the Gulf.

Mr. Mubarak mediated an agreement to demarcate the disputed border between the two countries before the emir of Qatar, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al Thani, would agree to go to the December 1992 GCC summit in Abu Dhabi.

The two neighbours, both members of OPEC, have, however, failed to carry out the demarcation, which was supposed to be completed in a year, because they could not agree on how it should be done or by whom, the diplomats said.

Saudi Arabia has consis-

tently played down the differences with Qatar and Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayef said on Sunday incidents like those reported by *Al Hayat* would be handled bilaterally between the two states.

But diplomats said maverick Qatar, which has shown an increasing tendency to distance its policies from those of its dominant neighbour, might escalate the crisis if no quick solution is found.

The 1992 crisis appears to have been more serious, triggered by a border clash in which three people died. It was not clear if this year's incidents at sea involved any casualties.

Qatari boycotts of GCC meetings, where unanimity is the rule, built up tensions ahead of the 1992 summit and Gulf diplomats said they would be watching to see if Doha stays away from more GCC meetings ahead of the December summit.

They said that Qatari ministers had attended meetings of GCC foreign finance and trade ministers in the past few weeks.

Any differences then were confined to Qatari "reservations" which were apparently appended to virtually all decisions taken by those ministers. But these were not publicised at the time, the diplomats said.

Foreign ministers are due to meet again in Bahrain on Dec. 17, two days before the summit opens.

Jordan dismisses report

(Continued from page 1)

der," Rose Al Yusef said. "The Iraqi authorities don't even bother to hide the fact that these are murders and promptly attribute them to armed Iraqi bands."

According to a Foreign Ministry spokesman, the bodies of 6,500 Egyptians have been repatriated from Iraq since 1986.

Most of the estimated two million Egyptian workers in Iraq in the 1980s returned home after Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait in August 1990, sparking the Gulf crisis.

Ambassador Mr. Qadi categorically denied the report, saying that the Jordanian embassy in Cairo was in continuous contact with the Egyptian authorities through the ministries of foreign

affairs and labour and the Egyptian embassy in Amman to verify the accuracy of such accusations.

"Egyptian citizens and workers live in Jordan among their kinsmen and people and are enjoying the respect and love of their Jordanian brothers," Mr. Qadi said.

Egyptian workers are governed by a labour agreement renewed by both Jordan and Egypt last September during meetings of the ministers of labour of the two countries, he noted.

Mr. Al Qadi said the embassy was ready to present the necessary documents to refute accusations and false claims.

He added that a large number of Egyptians live in Jordan and it was natural that some of them die from natural causes.

Israelis seal 3 homes

(Continued from page 1)

said. Mr. Najib expressed regret that the kidnapping ended with Waxman's death.

"We ask for forgiveness from the Waxman family," he said.

Israel has said it received no serious offer from the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, which claimed responsibility for the kidnapping, to negotiate terms for Waxman's release.

The prosecution alleged that Mr. Yarnur disguised himself as an orthodox Jew — wearing a beard and a skullcap — to lure the kidnapping Waxman into the kidnappers' car in central Israel.

It said Mr. Najib provided the keys to the house in the occupied West Bank where the soldier was held and delivered food to the three kidnappers, who were killed in the Israeli commando raid.

Both of the accused, the

indictment said, belonged to the military wing of Hamas.

Police shot and wounded two suspected Palestinian car thieves near Tel Aviv on Tuesday, Israel's police chief said.

"I do not see any connection to guerrilla activity at this moment. It is simply car theft," Inspector-General Assaf Hefetz told army radio.

He said police opened fire in the Tel Aviv suburb of Bnei Brak at a car carrying three Palestinians from the West Bank who ignored orders to stop and drove away at high speed.

Two of the Palestinians were wounded and taken to hospital, where doctors said they were in critical condition. The third man, who was unhurt, was arrested.

Palestinian police have released over the last week most of the 150 Islamic Jihad members detained after a suicide bomber killed three Israeli soldiers, the group said Tuesday.

Rabin wants 'separation'

(Continued from page 1)

she, who complained that Mr. Rabin only met with settlers during his tour and ignored a month-old request from Palestinian officials to see him.

"I guess he does not care about a whole city that is suffering daily from his troops and settlers. It is time for him to be more realistic and practical," the mayor said.

Mr. Rabin said he understood the settlers' concerns about security given the number of attacks carried out against them, but said peace talks with the PLO must not stop.

"We will do our utmost to fight them (the fundamentalists) without giving them the victory they want, the cessation of the peace process," Mr. Rabin said.

Since the first Israel-PLO accord was signed in September 1993, bloodshed has claimed 93 Israelis and 187 Palestinians.

There was heavy security throughout Mr. Rabin's visit to Hebron, the first since the mosque was reopened to

both Muslims and Jews on Nov. 7, six months after the massacre there.

Mr. Rabin entered through the Jewish side and exited from the Muslim. The building, holy to both faiths as the resting place of the Patriarch Abraham and his family, has been divided between them and fitted with metal detectors and closed circuit television cameras. Both groups complain their allotted space is too small.

Hebron, where 450 Jews live wedged in among 110,000 Arabs, has been the site of some of the bloodiest violence between the two groups. On Sunday extremists claimed responsibility for the latest slaying after a rabbi was shot dead just south of the city.

Israel and the Palestinians are to begin to start negotiating next week on transferring control of West Bank territory to the self-rule government.

Mr. Rabin said Monday that he would not abandon any settlements, but he said settlers had urged him to consolidate some of the 125 settlements in the West Bank.

Donors meet in Brussels

(Continued from page 1)

Israeli-occupied territories, half in grants and half in loans, for the period 1994-98.

Washington has pledged \$500 million for five years and Tokyo \$200 million over two years.

In a statement Monday, the EU stressed its desire to

help, but added that foreign aid "can only be complementary to the efforts of the parties concerned."

It called for more donations from Arab states and urged Palestinians and Israelis to better implement their accord allowing Palestinian workers and products access to Israel.

Israel, Syria stiffen stands

(Continued from page 1)

January. But Mr. Clinton refused to elaborate and his stinging defeat by the Republicans has now cast doubt over U.S. willingness to guarantee a treaty by sending peace troops to the Golan.

For Israel, the European Union's lifting Monday of an eight-year embargo on arms sales to Syria came as another reversal.

"What should be lifted is the embargo on negotiations," Mr. Peres said. "If the Syrians want peace why do they want arms?"

He recalled that the United States had still not taken Syria off its list of states sponsoring "terrorism."

A state of emergency decreed in 1963 is still in force in Syria where constitutional rights are suspended and arbitrary arrests the norm, Mr. Peres added.

To add to Mr. Rabin's problems, leaders of the 13,000 Golan settlers told him they would step up their "democratic struggle" against withdrawal from the strategic plateau Israel seized

in the 1967 Middle East war. The struggle included trying to bring down the government, which has offered Syria a partial withdrawal in return for a peace treaty.

Mr. Christopher's forthcoming visit will be for three days, the State Department said Monday.

Mr. Christopher will hold meetings with Israeli and Syrian leaders beginning next Tuesday but "his itinerary beyond that is not clear," State Department spokesman Michael McCurry told a briefing.

The secretary of state was scheduled to travel to NATO headquarters in Brussels for a meeting of NATO foreign ministers that was to focus on Bosnia and expansion of the security alliance.

Mr. Christopher was to spend Saturday in Brussels to hold bilateral meetings with officials from the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, Mr. McCurry said.

He then heads to Budapest to accompany President Clinton at the summit meeting of the 52-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

Titanic to Estonia—ship safety agency battles the waves

By Natasha Brown

Reuters

LONDON—When the Titanic struck an Atlantic iceberg and sank in 1912 with the loss of 1,500 lives, world maritime powers drew up a convention to set standards for safety at sea.

The same convention is still in force but could see major revisions after the ferry Estonia capsized in stormy seas in late September, killing more than 900 passengers and crew.

"Every time a ship goes to sea there's always the possibility of something happening to it," said William O'Neill, secretary-general of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the U.N. agency set up in 1948 to oversee maritime issues.

"But what we're really doing is minimising the risk — or maximising the safety factor," he told Reuters.

The Original Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) convention was adopted in 1914 after the British government proposed an international conference following the Titanic disaster.

The convention introduced new international requirements for safety of navigation for all merchant ships, provision of watertight and fire-resistant bulkheads or dividing walls inside ships and lifesaving and firefighting equipment requirements.

Since then the SOLAS convention has been revised and amended, the IMO hosted its first SOLAS conference in 1960 and the convention was rewritten to extend many safety measures to cargo as well as passenger ships.

The latest version dates back to 1974 with a series of amendments adopted in later years.

This year the Maritime Safety Committee of the IMO, which meets from Dec. 5-9 in London, is expected to begin discussing amendments to the chapter on roll-on/roll-off (Ro-ro) ferries, in the wake of the Estonia disaster.

The issue is not new. Ro-ro safety standards were raised in 1988 after the Herald of Free Enterprise capsized in the channel in 1987, killing 193 people when a bow door was left open.

Mr. O'Neill has ordered an investigation into all aspects of Ro-ro safety including the introduction of bulkheads to divide up the vast expanse of



Anchor chains, winches and capstans can be seen in this photo of the doomed luxury Titanic lying on the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean off Newfoundland. The ship, which sank in 1912, was photographed by remote controlled sleds

car deck, where a relatively small amount of water moving about can capsize a ferry.

"These ships are designed not to have water and are very unstable should water be present," Mr. O'Neill said, adding that up to now the ferry safety question had centred on the issue of preventing water getting on to the vehicle deck.

"Now we are talking about water that is there either through casualty, as in the case of the Estonia, or through management, as with the Herald of Free Enterprise," he said.

Ferries are not the only

safety issue to concern the IMO.

The Institute of London Underwriters, which represents the marine and aviation insurance market, said in October that some 330 seafarers had lost their lives at sea so far during 1994 on 74 cargo ships and tankers, besides the more than 900 killed on the Estonia.

Dry bulk carriers, which transport goods such as iron ore, coal and wheat, attract less publicity when they are lost than ferries — which may result in large numbers of casualties — or oil tankers — which may cause dramatic

pollution.

"I am very concerned about bulk carriers, particularly the ones involved in the iron ore trade — they seem to be the ones suffering most of the casualties," Mr. O'Neill said.

The IMO is targeting ships built in the 1980s of "high tensile" steel for stricter annual surveys. The steel is as strong as traditional mild steel but thinner and therefore cheaper per ship. High tensile ships are thought to be potentially more risky because the steel can corrode more rapidly.

Stresses caused when load-

ing and unloading these large ships and corrosion of the steel plates is thought to have contributed to some losses.

"You're in a period when these ships are beginning to show signs of fatigue," Mr. O'Neill said.

One problem for safety standards is that ships are rarely built to a standard design, unlike aircraft where an accident can immediately be followed by safety checks on all planes from the manufacturer.

"With ships, every one is unique so you can't have the same kind of approach," said

Mr. O'Neill.

The IMO's Maritime Safety Committee will also be discussing amending the agency's training standards convention to try to eliminate the main cause of shipping accidents — human error.

"Just getting the training standards convention up-graded doesn't take care of all the human error," Mr. O'Neill said. But he added that it did set the required levels of competence.

A survey of accidents by marine ships insurers found 60 per cent of accidents were caused by human error.

Jesulin rewrites Spain's bullfight record book

By Robert Hart

Reuters

MADRID — At the end of another bullfighting season in Spain, addicts of the "national fiesta" are still reeling from the impact of a slim, 20-year-old matador who has rewritten the record books.

Jesus, Janeiro, from the Andalusian town of Ubrique, who fights under the name of Jesulin de Ubrique, has at least in statistical terms put the exploits of even the legendary Manuel Benitez "El Cordobes" in the shade.

And he has done it with a flamboyance and extravagance of style which has split the bullfighting fraternity, winning thousands of fans among the young and especially among women but offending many purist "aficionados."

While Spain's bullfighters are wintering lucratively in the arenas of Mexico and South America, pundits at home still pore incredulously over Jesulin's record this year.

In the seven-month season from March to October the extrovert Jesulin, a lover of horse-riding and hunting, fought in 133 "corridos", the traditional bullfight in which three matadors fight and kill two bulls each.

This beat by no less than 32 the previous record of 121 corridos set by El Cordobes in 1970.

In the process he was awarded 339 ears, the token of recognition of a particularly fine performance conceded by the president of the bullring according to the strength of approval shown by the spectators.

To achieve his record, Jesulin appeared in all the major festivals in big centres such as Madrid, Seville and Pamplona, and also travelled relentlessly to appear in corridos in small towns all over the country.

As the season developed and his reputation grew, his style became more and more flamboyant.

He began to concentrate on crowd-pleasing gestures such as performing passes on his knees, facing the bull and putting his hand on its forehead, kneeling with his back to a bull barely two metres away and bending to kiss the bull's horn.

In a welter of interviews in newspapers and magazines, his words were as extravagant and sometimes inflammatory as his actions in the bullring.

"I believe the time has come for a revolution and to offer a spectacle. I don't know if I will do well or badly in the ring, but what is certain is that no one will be bored."

"To smile at a bull when you have him in front of you is like presenting a flower to a beautiful woman."

It was with women that Jesulin made his biggest mark. His lean body encased in the tight-fitting, sequined "suit of lights" and his angular, slightly urchin face and stubbly hair drew them in their thousands to his fight.

In recognition of his charisma with the opposite sex, he staged a special bullfight just for women spectators in the historic town of Aranjuez, south of Madrid, in October.

More than 8,000 ecstatic women packed the Aranjuez "Plaza de Toros" to see Jesulin, clad in all white, dispatch the usual six bulls and then a seventh as an encore. Flowers and items of underwear rained down from the stands as the far from reluctant hero traded kisses with his most ardent admirers at the end.

The bullfighting establishment was scandalised by what it saw as a degrading spectacle unworthy of one of Spain's great traditions, which is reported on the arts pages of newspapers alongside music and dance rather than as sport.

The views of one Madrid aficionado of more than 40 years were typical.

"Boys like him are 'charlats' — like Chaplin. Bullfighting is a serious matter. The bull is a serious animal and should be respected. 'It

is fine by me if he makes loads of money, but I don't like to see bullfighting turned into a joke," he said.

Jesulin was also in trouble with the bullfighting authorities more than once.

On Sept. 14, when he fought his record-breaking 122nd corrida in the southern town of Albacete, he did not kill his second bull as a personal gesture to mark the record.

His manager Manuel Morilla was obliged to try to placate the local powers angry at this breach of bullfighting etiquette by claiming Jesulin did not hear three trumpet fanfares which warn the matador that he has exceeded the time limit for different phases of the spectacle.

And at the end of his last corrida of the season, in Sanlúcar de Barrameda near Cadiz, he allowed his manager into the ring to make a few passes at the final bull.

Mr. Morilla was knocked over and narrowly avoided a serious goring and both he and Jesulin face a heavy fine by the regional civil government.

In terms of publicity, Jesulin had only one serious rival in the past season — 22-year-old Valencian Enrique Ponce, his complete opposite in almost every way.

Reserved, stylish, classical, Ponce won frequent eulogies for his elegant cape work and mastery with the sword.

The only personality trait he and Jesulin have in common is a love of motorcycles and Ponce does not hide his dislike of the aggressive Andalusian style.

"The only thing which might bother me would be a bullfighter who had my style. For that reason I can say that Jesulin does not hurt me, and I don't hurt him," he said. "Sometimes I ask myself how anyone can fight like that. I would be ashamed."

Jesulin's response is characteristically blunt: "Ponce has not got what it takes to fight bulls like I do."

Predators close in on Russian press

By Vanora Bennett

Reuters

MOSCOW — It's been four years since the Russian press won its freedom from Soviet censorship. But as the heady days of liberal democracy give way to a more familiar order, editors are wondering how much longer it will last.

"No-one will talk about this subject now, and do you know why? Out of fear. Fear for themselves, fear for their families. People are being killed for that sort of thing," one young reporter, speaking off the record, told Reuters.

Many of journalists are already scared.

Last month, an investigative reporter was blown to pieces in his newsroom when the suitcase he thought contained documents proving army corruption turned out to be a bomb. He was 27.

How did officials react? Without marked sympathy. As thousands of liberal intellectuals thronged behind Dmitry Kholodov's coffin, President Boris Yeltsin weighed in with an elder statesman's view.

After rather perfunctory condolences, he issued the latest of a series of strictures against "irresponsible" journalists reporting unfavourably on the activities of politicians.

He suggested creating a system of licences for journalists, which would protect them from violence — but which could be withdrawn if they failed to toe the government line.

Two years ago, Mr. Yeltsin stifled an official report calling his attention to the same army corruption Kholodov was investigating.

Although he made a point of defending his defence minister from allegations the army was behind Kholodov's murder, the president bowed to growing pressure after the reporter's death and sacked the deputy minister at the heart of the scandal.

It was a melancholy coda to the era of freedom ushered in by the Soviet press law of June 1990, which guaranteed reporters the right to write

and allowed private individuals to set up their own newspapers.

Since then, the press has started publishing stories and dumped the old practice of printing pages of turgid political speeches in full. The press has become interesting to read.

Now politicians gearing up to parliamentary elections in 1995 and presidential elections in 1996 are keen to reassert control over a press which no longer depends fully on them for its existence.

Three years into capitalism, editors say the next war for freedom of speech will be fought on a different front than the past struggles with communist authorities. Economic, rather than political, battle lines are already being drawn up.

Most media organisations became joint-stock companies in 1992. But they still depend on state goodwill for printing, paper and distribution, monopolies where costs have soared way above world prices.

"Can it be by chance that everything in this country has been privatised except these things?" asked Pavel Gusev, a ex-boss of murdered reporter Kholodov and editor-in-chief of the daily Moskovsky Komsomolets.

"It's obvious that they want to keep us on a short rein."

As the political elite swings away from radical liberalism to more centrist policies, wealthy post-Soviet banks and firms have bought big stakes in media groups.

The commercial firms are the real danger to press freedom, said Igor Golumbovsky, editor of the liberal daily Izvestia.

"We know we are being pursued on all sides: by the government, the administration and commercial groups," he told Reuters.

"The state is limited in what it can do, but private firms are not. They understand how influential the press is."

Many entrepreneurs have close ties with political groups, and are likely to en-

courage their papers to sponsor their politicians when voting time comes round.

Mr. Golumbovsky said the firms which had offered lavish funding to Izvestia tended to want a say in what went into the paper.

"I tell them I can't take their money. So they've stopped coming to us with investment projects," he said.

To ward off interference, Mr. Golumbovsky has kept a majority of Izvestia shares in the hands of his editorial staff. Another 28 per cent is held by small investors.

The Olbi finance company, allied to reformist ex-Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar, holds just 6.8 per cent and Mr. Golumbovsky says it is unlikely to be able to increase its holding.

The most widely known commercial investor in the press is Most Group, led by entrepreneur Vladimir Gusinsky. Among its interests it numbers a bank, a building group, airline and security guards sections and an investments department.

Most Group also owns majority stakes in the liberal daily Sevodnya, Ekho Moskvy radio station and the independent television channel NTV. Mr. Gusinsky, a liberal, is close to trusted Yeltsin ally Yuri Luzhkov, the mayor of Moscow.

Mr. Gusinsky has said he's afraid of what would happen to Russia — and to new entrepreneurs like himself — if conservatives, communists, or nationalists win the next elections. But he insists he does not want editorial control of his press.

Sevodnya's commercial director, Marina Latysheva, agreed that most groups did not put pressure on journalists to take a particular editorial stance.

"They've chosen like-minded people for their reporters, whose views on developing Russia's economy and politics are the same as those of most group. So to say they dictate how to write would be quite wrong," she said.

World Bank signs \$58m credit with Arafat

BRUSSELS (R) — The World Bank signed an accord with PLO leader Yasser Arafat Tuesday for a \$58 million credit to the Palestinian authorities, in a show of donor commitment to rebuilding the former occupied territories.

"This is a very important milestone on the road to reconstruction and bringing relief and support to the Palestinian people," said Mr. Koch-Weser, World Bank vice-president for Middle East and North Africa region, at a news conference in Brussels.

The agreement was signed hours before the major donors were due to meet in Brussels to discuss how to pay out urgently needed money already promised to the Palestinians.

"Much needs to be done to bring further financial support which is desperately

needed by the Palestinian authorities," said Mr. Koch-Weser after signing the accord with Mr. Arafat.

It was important, he said, to make sure that people on the ground reaped the benefits of the peace process.

Mr. Arafat, on a three-day visit to Brussels, thanked the World Bank for signing the accord and appealed to donors to keep their promises of much-needed aid.

"The international community has a moral and political responsibility towards our people," he said, adding that Israeli occupation had destroyed his country.

In October last year, aid donors pledged more than \$2 billion over five years for projects to support Palestinian self-rule, with \$700 million earmarked for this year.

Mr. Koch-Weser said only \$200 to \$240 million would be disbursed this year and delays

in implementing the peace process had set back economic projects.

The new credit, made up of \$30 million from the Saudi government, \$18 million from Denmark and \$10 million from Switzerland, is part of a \$128 million project.

Mr. Koch-Weser said the money would be used for infrastructure projects in the occupied territories, including water and education projects.

Last September the World Bank signed a credit of over \$30 million to the Palestinian authority. Next month, the Kuwaiti government is expected to sign an accord for \$10 million followed by \$30 million from the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development.

A World Bank official said no interest rate was attached to the credit, which had a 10-year period of grace.

Poor harvests send world wheat stocks to 15-year low

OSLO (R) — Norway's financial markets recovered their nerve Tuesday after an initial dip when voters rejected membership of the European Union (EU), and analysts expect the country's solid economy to outweigh the "no" factor.

The crown weakened before bouncing back to Monday's levels and short-term money market rates, which were also down to start with, later clawed back lost ground.

Long bond yields were however pushed up nearly 10 basis points and the stock market dipped in disappointment over the vote.

"The market has reacted with surprising calm to the 'no' to the EU," said Jon Rinde, a senior economist with Norway's biggest savings bank, Sparebanken Nor.

He said he believed both short-term and long-term interest rates should shed about one percentage point sometime early next year on the strength of the Norwegian economy.

Others argue that the 'no' could push up short-term money market rates in the coming three to six months and possibly weaken the crown because of uncertainty over the European Economic Area Agreement (EEA) between the EU and EFTA and the government's future economic policy.

"It would not be surprising if we saw the crown weaken somewhat," said Aamund Lund, chief analyst with Den Norske Bank, Norway's biggest commercial bank.

The crown, which touched 105 on its reverse ECU index

early Tuesday, strengthened to 104.52 around midday. Late on Monday, the crown stood at 104.55. The Norwegian currency was quoted at 4.3653/60 against the mark versus Monday's 4.3690.

Three-month money market rates touched 7.33 per cent in early trade, but slipped back to 6.93 around midday.

Debt market yields were however somewhat higher. The state's 10-year bond was up eight basis points from Monday to 8.44 per cent.

The Oslo Bourse all-share index was down five points around midday to 603.51 in thin volume.

Finance Minister Sigbjørn Johnsen warned that Norway's economy, underpinned by huge oil and gas revenues, faced new and demanding challenges after the 'no' vote.

"This requires that we continue a steady course in our economic policy to prop up confidence in Norway's economy so that we secure the basis for investments and jobs in Norway," Mr. Johnsen said in a statement.

"The budget deficit will be further reduced," he said. The minority labour government's draft 1995 budget has an overall deficit of 20.9 billion crowns (\$3.06 billion).

Central bank governor Torstein Møland said the 'no' to the EU called for strict economic policies to avoid the impression that Norway would become less attractive for investment.

"The challenges we now face underscore the need for economic policies to remain tight," Mr. Møland said in a statement Tuesday morning.

Pressure on Egyptian pound distorts market

CAIRO (R) — A de facto two-tier exchange rate system with a narrow margin has crept into the dollar-pound market in Cairo because of pressure on the Egyptian pound, dealers say.

Public sector banks are selling dollars at 3.3970 pounds and customers can then sell the dollars to high street dealers for up to 3.4055 pounds, making a small profit by arbitrage.

Dealers say the distortion to the market is the result of official pressure to protect the Egyptian pound, widely seen as overvalued and liable to devaluation.

Dealers at some private-sector banks have been complaining that large quantities of dollars are hard to find, though they deny there is a run on the pound of the kind which forced the Central Bank of Egypt to intervene in July.

Economy Minister Mahmoud Mohammad told a news conference Monday that the government would not intervene in the foreign exchange markets and that anyone could buy as much foreign currency as they wanted.

Ahmad Dessouki, a dealer at the large public-sector National Bank of Egypt (NBE), told Reuters the bank would sell any amount of dollars at the attractive rate of 3.3970 pounds.

But in practice customers seeking dollars at NBE's main downtown branch Tuesday had to obtain approval from a bank official. The official turned down some requests, saying purchases were limited to about \$1,000 per customer.

An economist who watches the foreign exchange market closely said: "There's a non-market element creeping in. There's some pressure on the pound and they're dealing with it, not through free selling by the central bank, but by leaning on people."

"The public-sector banks are not selling freely at the rates they quote," he added.

Dealers say that the restrictions and the separation of the rates amount to an unofficial two-tier exchange rate system.

Earlier in the month central bank deputy governor Mohammad Al-Barbary told Reuters the bank had told commercial banks to ask questions before selling large quantities of dollars.

They should make sure the buyers want the money for what he called "genuine transactions," not for speculation, he added.

Dealers at commercial banks have denied receiving any such instructions and some say they continue to operate as though there was a completely free market.

But one said there was what he called a gentleman's agreement not to sell dollars at more than 3.4200 pounds.

about the maximum quoted by any commercial bank.

The central bank could support the bank by drawing down its foreign reserves of about \$17.5 billion but there is no evidence that the bank has been selling many dollars.

Central bank officials declined to comment Tuesday on developments in the foreign exchange markets.

Egypt is under pressure to devalue from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which is sending a mission to Cairo from Dec. 1 to 19.

The IMF argues that after three years of stability against the dollar, at between 3.30 and 3.40 to the dollar, the pound needs adjusting to take account of Egyptian inflation, which has averaged 9.4 per cent a year over the period.

The fund says the exchange rate is frustrating the government's attempts to promote exports.

Government ministers agree but Mr. Mahmoud said devaluation would have the negative effect of adding to inflation, especially as commodity exports cover only about one third the value of commodity imports.

Asia steps up bid to fight money laundering

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Asian governments are stepping up the fight against money-laundering as the danger of having criminal funds in legitimate financial systems grips the region, officials said Tuesday.

"Asian countries are working harder now than ever to fight money laundering," said Leo Verwoerd, president of the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the first international body plotting strategy against money-laundering.

Mr. Verwoerd, attending a three-day conference here on money-laundering in Asia, told AFP that many countries in the region were now adopting recommendations drafted by the FATF five years ago to keep criminal elements out of their economies.

"The measures include making money-laundering a criminal offence and getting banks and financial institutions to thoroughly check customers and transactions," Mr. Verwoerd said.

"They also compel banks to report suspicious transactions to the authorities and provide sharing of intelligence and extradition ties between neighbouring countries to nab (money) launderers," Mr. Verwoerd said.

The FATF — initiated in 1989 by the Group of Seven countries, comprising the United States, Canada, Japan, Germany, France, Britain and Italy — has a membership of 26 countries worldwide.

Arab Gulf states to press ahead with joint power grid

RIYADH (AFP) — Arab Gulf states will press ahead with plans to link their electricity networks in a central grid as part of attempts to integrate their economies and services, a Saudi minister has said.

Electricity and water ministers from the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states agreed on the project at talks in Riyadh and decided to invite the private sector and regional funds to finance the network. Saudi Industry and Electricity Minister Abdul Aziz Al Zamil told reporters after the meeting.

The project has two phases. The first will link the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and neighbouring Oman and the second will cover Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Bahrain.

"We have decided to concentrate now on the second stage as linking internal electricity networks in the first phase has not yet been completed," Sheikh Zamil said.

He was referring to separate power grids in the UAE's seven emirates, whose officials said last month they would soon begin linking the grids. The project, to cost more than \$150 million, will be finished in 1995.

Sheikh Zamil said the ministers had agreed to invite the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) and other regional development funds to participate in the Gulf power project.

He did not mention costs but they have been estimated by the Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consultancy (GOIC) at around \$2.5 billion.

Gulf officials said the common GCC grid would save large funds, upgrade production and ensure supplies for any member in emergency.

"Upon completion, the project will also ease pressure on the generating capacities in member states by allowing them access to power from other members during their peak periods," the Doha-based GOIC said in a recent study.

The GCC network, to be funded proportionately by GCC nations, is part of a greater project to link power networks in the 22-member Arab League at a cost estimated by AFESD at around \$6.5 billion.

AFESD has completed a feasibility study on the Arab project, which will be carried out in three stages according to geographical proximity. They cover the GCC, the Maghreb region in North Africa and the remaining league members, which will later be linked to Europe via Turkey.

Without such a joint network, Arab states need to invest nearly \$100 billion in electricity projects to face demand in the next 15 years.

AFESD said the investments covered setting up new stations and expanding existing units until the year 2010 to face a six per cent annual growth in consumption.

Norwegian markets sanguine about 'no' vote to European Union

LONDON (R) — World stocks of wheat will soon be at their lowest for 15 years, experts said Tuesday.

A report by the London-based International Wheat Council (IWC) estimated stocks in 1994-95 at 104 million tonnes compared with 128 million last season.

The IWC blamed poor harvests in Russia and Ukraine after a devastating drought in Australia for a poor 1994 world harvest seen at only 526 million tonnes — after 558 million in 1993.

Wheat prices have already soared this year by about 50 per cent, pinching importing countries, particularly in the Third World. But they have eased about \$10 in recent weeks from the highs at around \$150 per tonne.

"The situation can be reversed. Prices might go down," said IWC senior economist Bill de Maria. "Higher prices could lead to an

expansion of sowings in North America and Canada."

Some big importers like China have been delaying purchases in the hope that prices will continue to slip. And the IWC also sees lower-than-expected imports by Russia despite the bad harvest there, amid hints that Russians are eating more potatoes.

Russia is now expected to produce 35.9 million tonnes of wheat in 1994, down from 43.5 million in 1993. Ukraine's crop is forecast at 15.3 million, down from 21 million.

Less grain was planted in the former Soviet Union and then the weather turned bad at harvest time. "About six per cent of the crop may have been left unharvested because of early frosts," the IWC said.

But Russian wheat imports this season are now seen like-

ly to be three million tonnes from a previous estimate of 3.5 million.

The IWC says some recovery in the world output of wheat can be expected in 1995 if assumptions of normal weather conditions and average yields are made. It sees a 1995 harvest at 560 million tonnes compared with the 1994 estimate of 526 million.

Sowing in the northern hemisphere, which accounts for around two-thirds of annual production, is complete and winter grains look good in Western Europe.

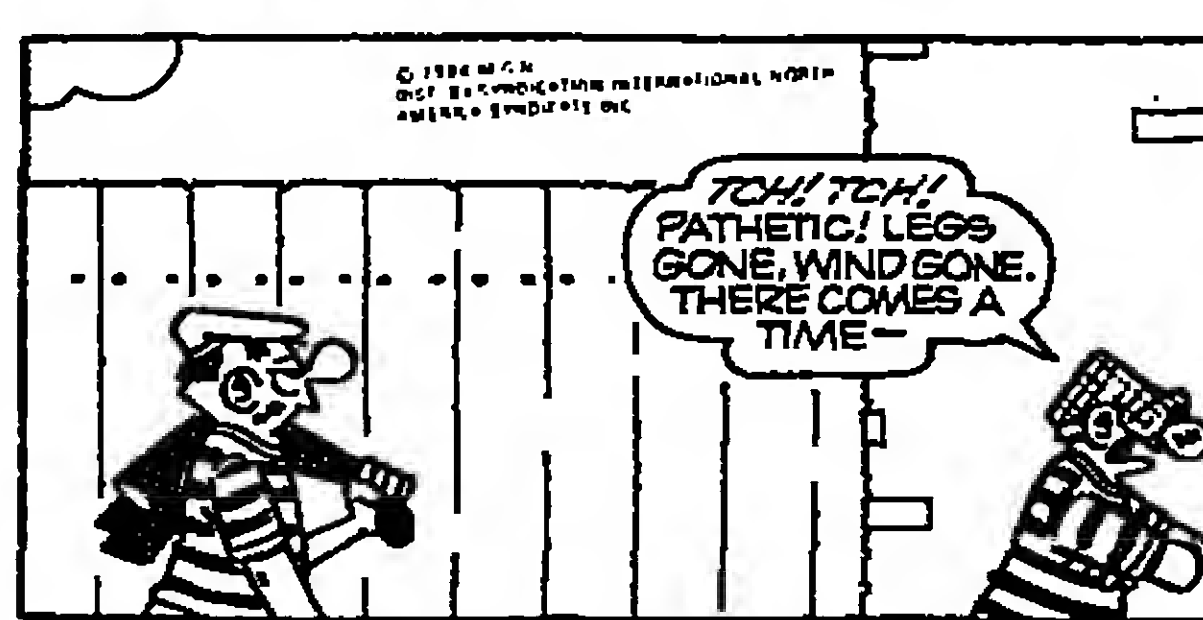
"Overall prospects for winter wheat crops look quite optimistic," said Mr. de Maria.

The impact of Australia's worst recorded drought this year had already been factored into IWC calculations. It left unchanged its earlier estimate of an Australian crop at 7.5 million tonnes.

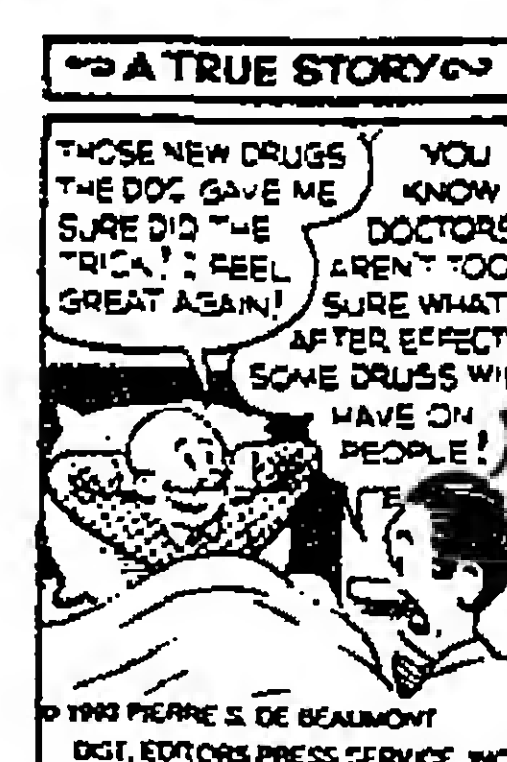
Peanuts



Andy Capp



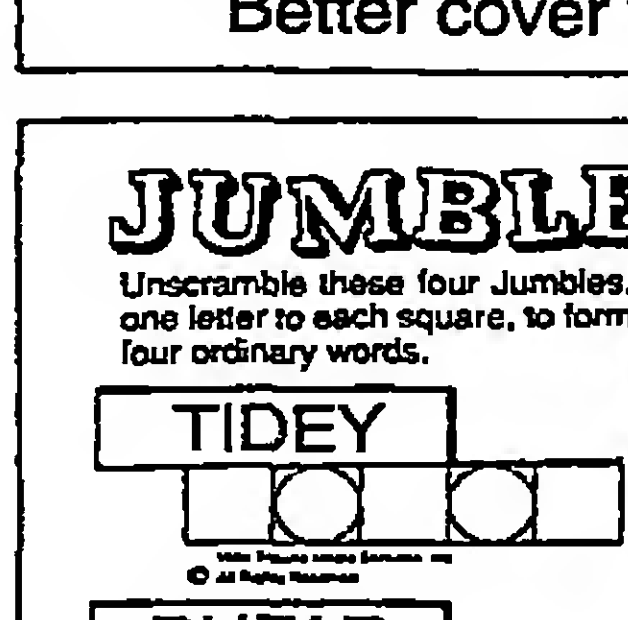
Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



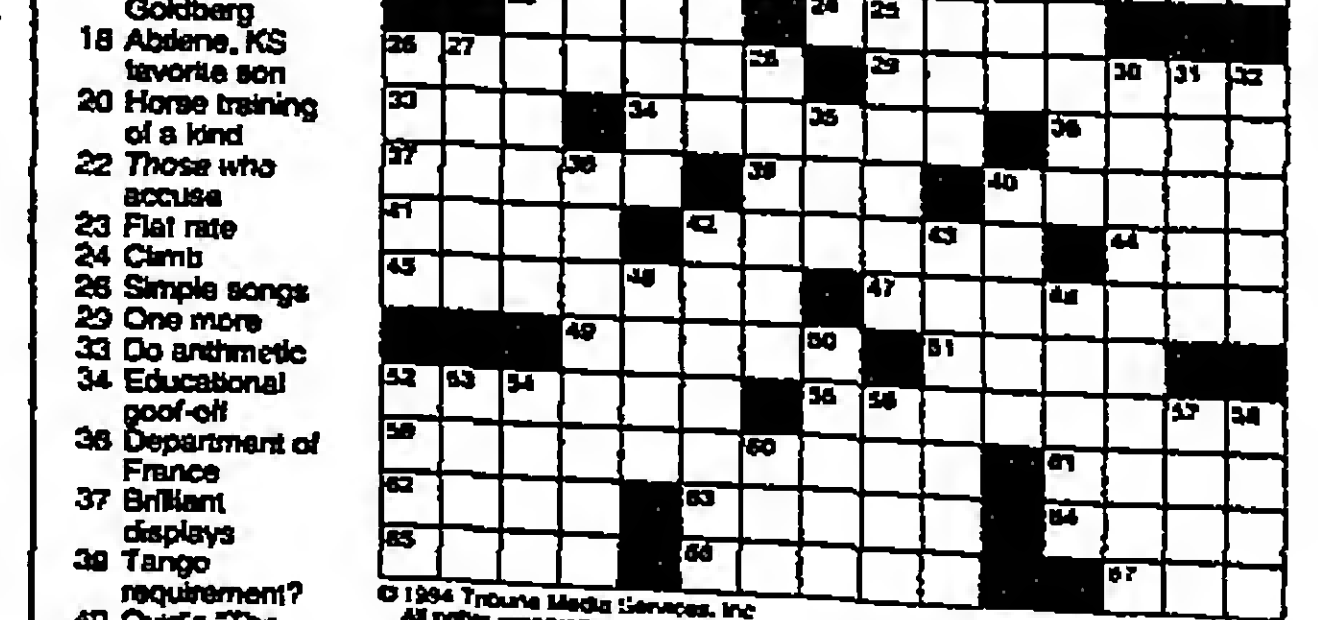
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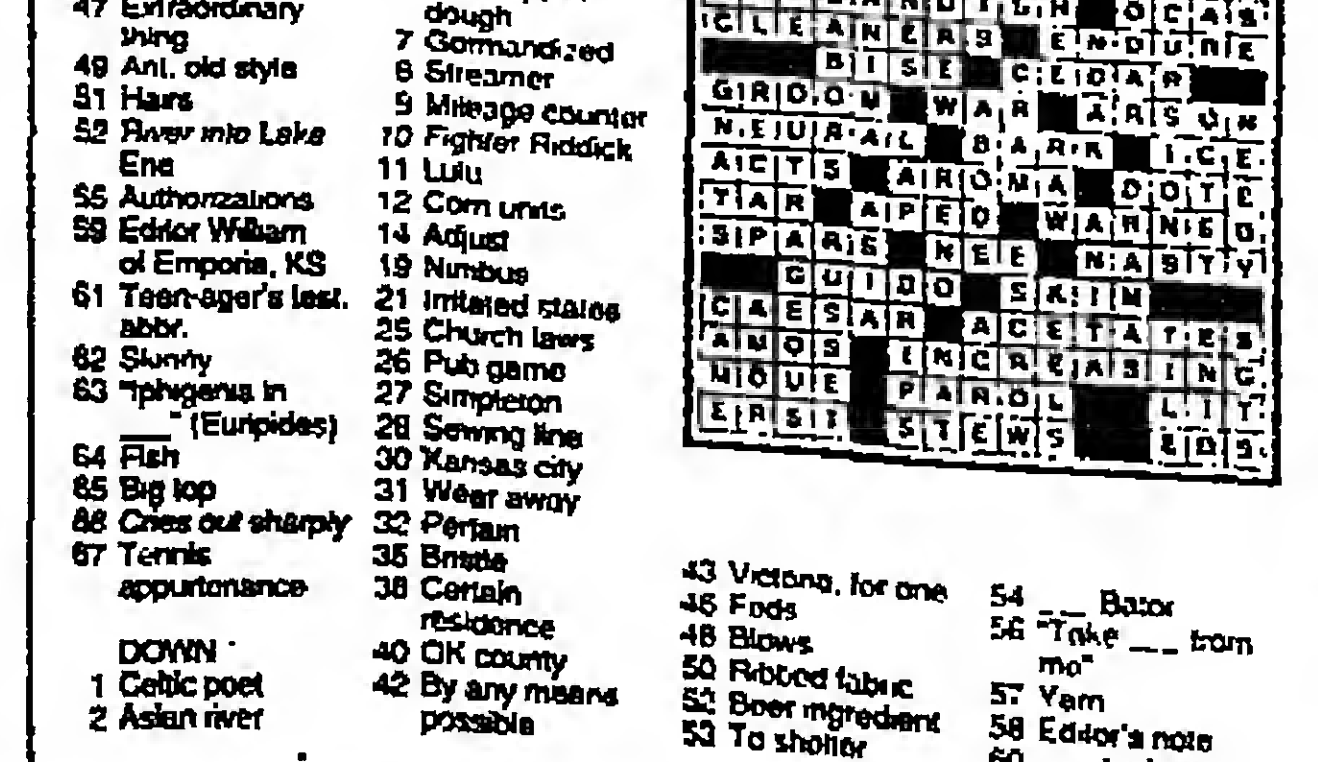
THE Daily Crossword by Wilson McBeath



THE Daily Crossword by Wilson McBeath



THE Daily Crossword by Wilson McBeath



49ers clinch division by trouncing Saints

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — The San Francisco 49ers are back at their accustomed spot, National Conference West champions for the 11th time in 14 years with more — they hope — to come.

So what if there were a few stumbles and fumbles on the way.

Steve Young threw for 281 yards and four touchdowns Monday night, overcoming a pair of seemingly costly fumbles as the 49ers beat New Orleans 35-14 to become the first National Football League team to clinch a playoff spot this season.

More important, it kept the Niners (10-2) on top of Dallas (10-2) for the home-field advantage on their inevitable course towards a third straight NFC title game. San Francisco, which won for the seventh straight time, would get the home field if both teams win out because it beat the Cowboys two weeks ago.

Young, who had completed 68.2 per cent of his passes entering the game, was 24 of 30 as he hit four and passes in a game for the fourth time this season.

He threw first-half touchdowns of 4 yards each to Brent Jones and John Taylor, found Jones again from 6 yards out on a drive that consumed 9:02 at the start of the second half and capped the scoring with a 43-yarder on a slant to backup Nate Singletary.

That was enough to negate Tyrone Hughes' 86-yard return of a fumble by Ricky Watters for the Saints (4-8) and a second-quarter fumble by Young at the Saints' 12 that held the Niners to a 20-14 lead at halftime.

San Francisco now has won

10 or more games for 12 straight seasons and qualified for the playoffs in 11 of them, missing only in 1991 despite a 10-6 record.

This year's team, however, is one rebuilt by the signing of a half-dozen veterans to bolster a defense that can stop Dallas. The latest newcomer, Tim Harris, got a sack Monday night in his first game under a contract that pays him \$5,000 each time he dumps the quarterback.

The Niners led 20-14 at the half, but it might have been more if not for those two San Francisco fumbles.

In Irving, Texas, the defending Super Bowl champion Dallas Cowboys are in the National Football League playoffs, but there was no celebration at Valley Ranch.

A wild-card playoff berth several years ago would have meant champagne and cigars. Now the standards are much higher.

Dallas can win a division title in Philadelphia Sunday, but the players said even that will be taken in stride if it happens.

Dallas (10-2) is tied with San Francisco in the NFC but lost head-to-head to the 49ers.

The Cowboys resumed practice after their 42-31 victory over Green Bay on Thanksgiving with one important question looming: Who will start at quarterback?

Troy Aikman, who missed the Jason Garrett-inspired victory over the Packers with a sprained knee ligament, was moving much better and indicated he might be able to play.

"My knee is getting better, and I'll probably know more by Wednesday," Aikman

said. "I always want to get back as quick as I can, even though we have the red ball express from Princeton."

Garrett threw two touchdown passes in the victory over the Packers. The third-stringer played because both Aikman and Rodney Peete were hurt. Peete, who had a sore thumb, also was improved on Monday.

Philadelphia is three games behind Dallas with four to play.

Parity rules National Football League

With four weeks left in the regular season, parity has taken over the National Football League.

Take Dallas and San Francisco out of the mix and the NFL is the ultimate parody of former commissioner Pete Rozelle's vision "on any given day."

To wit: Fifteen teams, more than half the league, are between 7-5 and 5-7 and eight are at .500. If the playoffs started next week, a .500 team would qualify in each conference — the Jets in the AFC and the Packers or Falcons in the NFC.

Philadelphia and Minnesota, two teams that seemed a month ago to have a chance to challenge the 49ers and Cowboys in the NFC now have lost three straight. Each is in that 7-5 pack and each could easily miss the playoffs, as could Kansas City, another 7-5 team.

Pittsburgh and Cleveland are tied at 9-3 with San Diego for the best record in the AFC. Chicago, with Steve Walsh 7-0 as a starter replacing the high-priced

Erik Kramer, is atop the AFC Central at 8-4.

Here's how bizarre it gets. The Browns moved to 9-3 Sunday by beating Houston 34-10 with Vinny Testaverde back at quarterback after owner Art Modell made it clear to coach Bill Belichick that he wants one quarterback, not a revolving door between Testaverde and Mark Rypien.

Pittsburgh beat the Raiders 21-5 with Mike Tomczak at quarterback, but coach Bill Cowher said Neil O'Donnell, his leg healed, would be back this week when the Steelers visit Cincinnati.

But the Steelers may be glad next week's game is on the road. Tomczak is the favorite of Pittsburgh fans.

"Everybody has an opinion," he said. "If they didn't, I'd be pretty dull. Sure, some people will be disappointed, but I'm sure we'll keep everybody's support if we keep on winning."

But will they?

Pittsburgh is the "hot" team in the AFC now, primarily because of its defense. But the Vikings and Eagles were the "hot" teams three weeks ago at 7-2 and are suddenly groping for identities.

Why? "I wish I could pinpoint why we've lost three in a row. We're all frustrated right now," said the Eagles' Rich Kotite, a candidate for coach of the year a month ago; a candidate for a new job next year.

The new salary cap-free agency system may be a reason why winning and losing is a matter of a play or two a game. When the Vikings were

winning, they were scoring off turnovers — cornerback Anthony Parker had three TDs in three games. In three losses, they're minus-five in turnover ratio.

In New England's 12-10 win over the Colts, Don Majkowski's ill-advised lateral resulted in a turnover that killed the Colts' last chance. New England is 6-6, Indianapolis 5-7.

And where San Francisco has overcome injuries in its offensive line and the Cowboys got a storybook performance from Jason Garrett on Thanksgiving in the absence of Troy Aikman and Rodney Peete, other teams can't overcome injuries as well.

Miami, despite its comeback victory over the Jets, has been hurt by injuries to running backs Terry Kirby, Keith Byars and Bernie Parmelee. In fact, that may help by "forcing" Dan Marino to pass, as he did Sunday.

The Jets may be the epitome of the 1994 NFL, teasing its fans, then letting them down.

They beat Buffalo twice and lost to Miami twice.

On Sunday, they were the verge of moving into a tie for first in the AFC East for the first time this late in the season since 1986, leading the Dolphins 26-6 with 18-39 left.

But Marino saved Miami, throwing the winning pass to Mark Ingram, who caught all four, after faking a spike to stop the clock.

"We had," said Jets coach Pete Carroll, "so many chances to put this game away."

SPORTS IN BRIEF

2-time champion Lendl to miss Australian Open

MELBOURN (AP) — Two-time champion Ivan Lendl will miss the Australian Open tennis championships because of a back injury, tournament officials said Tuesday. Lendl, 34, won the tournament in 1989 and 1990 and was beaten as a finalist in 1983 and 1981. "I understand his back is just not up to it," said Tennis Australia president Geoff Pollard. Lendl's world ranking has this year dipped to 54th. The Australian Open, meanwhile, Tuesday announced a six per cent increase in prizemoney in Australian dollar terms. Prizemoney for the tournament — to be played Jan. 16-29 at the National Tennis Centre — will total 8,249,500 Australian dollars (U.S.\$6.228 million).

U.S. baseball owners prepare to impose salary cap

LEESBURG, Virginia (AP) — With little hope for a settlement at the bargaining table this week, owners of U.S. Major League Baseball teams are preparing to impose their salary cap plan when they meet Monday in Chicago. "Last year's system is a historical artifact and we cannot operate under it any more," Atlanta Braves president Stan Kasten said Monday night. "Clubs have to do something by (December) 7th because from that point forward we're into next season with last year's economic system." Talks resume Tuesday at an executive conference center near Dulles International Airport. Kasten and other members of the owners' bargaining committee met Monday with mediator W.J. Usery.

Vietnam appoint Brazilian coach

HANOI (R) — Vietnam have appointed Brazilian Edson Araujo Tavares to coach their national team as a first step towards launching professional soccer in the country, a Vietnam Soccer Federation spokesman said Tuesday. "Edson Tavares is the first foreign coach we've hired in the last 10 years," the spokesman said. Soviet and Chinese experts trained Vietnamese players in the past. The contract runs from November 20 to the end of 1995. The Asian Football Federation proposed the idea and an international cigarette company is providing the money.

Russian team without enough skates

MADRID (R) — A Russian team without enough skates for their players suffered a record defeat in the European roller hockey championships Monday. The daily Spanish newspaper El Pais said the Spanish skaters averaged a goal a minute in their 61-0 roller hockey victory over the Russians, a Spanish newspaper said. The daily El Pais said that when the Russians made team changes, the player going off had to pass his skates to the player coming on, leaving the team a man short much of the time.

Saudi Arabia, Mexico to kick-off for King Fahd Cup

RIYADH (AP) — Gulf champions Saudi Arabia are pitted against Mexico in the kick-off to the 1995 Inter Continental Cup Jan. 6. Six teams will be vying for the prestigious King Fahd Cup and a draw Monday placed Saudi Arabia, Mexico and Denmark in Group A. In Group B, South American champions Argentina, also the winners of the inaugural Transcontinental Cup, are pitted against African champions Nigeria and Asian champions Japan. Prince Sultan Bin Fahd, deputy chairman of the Youth Welfare Presidency said top soccer "stars" will participate in the matches, adding that it will help "raise technical standards" of the game in the kingdom.

Havelange: Strasbourg should host World Cup matches

PARIS (R) — World soccer chief Joao Havelange Monday told the organizers of the 1998 World Cup in France to reconsider Strasbourg as one of the sites for matches in the finals. Strasbourg was ruled out originally after the municipality decided the cost of repairing the stadium was too high. Havelange told a news conference there were very good reasons to reconsider Strasbourg's application. "It is a town of sports and culture and, moreover, it hosts the European Parliament," he said. Havelange is in France to review seven of the 10 stadiums chosen to host World Cup matches. Twelve cities considered and nine — Paris, Marseille, Lyon, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Nantes, Montpellier, St. Etienne and Lens — were eventually selected.

Wrong horse wins, but bookmakers lose

LONDON (R) — A case of mistaken identity caused misery and mirth at Lingfield on Monday, leaving on-course bookmakers red-faced and out of pocket to the tune of \$18,720. An entry mix-up resulted in a six-year-old sprinter called Crystal Heights winning the Sunningdale Apprentice Handicap —

not an eight-year-old jumper, of the same name, listed in the racecard. The latter, a chestnut gelding, had been backed down from 6-1 to 5-2 and ended up as the 11-4 favorite before the race. As a result, many bookmakers paid out on the winner before the error was discovered.

Schmeichel out at least a month

MANCHESTER (AP) — Manchester United goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel's back injury will keep him out of action for another month to six weeks, the team said Monday. The Danish international's injury, suffered during United's 3-0 home victory over Crystal Palace nine days ago, has turned out to be more serious than first thought. Schmeichel, 31, has torn muscles around his spinal discs and will not play until he is fully recovered, team officials said. Gary Walsh, who has played four games in Schmeichel's absence, will continue to start until the Dane returns.

Illegal betting syndicates booked

ROME (AFP) — Italian police have named 28 top businessmen in connection with illegal betting syndicates in football and Formula One motor racing. Newspaper and television chiefs along with company directors are among those under investigation for organizing lotteries in competition with the official betting agencies sanctioned by the government. The directors of the daily sports papers Gazzetta dello Sport and Corriere dello Sport are among those implicated, police said.

Montana's playing status unclear

KANSAS CITY (AP) — Joe Montana's playing status was unclear Monday after a foot injury knocked him out of the Kansas City Chiefs' game Sunday at Seattle. The National Football League team said Montana was being examined Monday after suffering what was initially described as a sprain to the arch of his left foot. The Chiefs said they hoped to know Monday the seriousness of Montana's injury. Last year, he missed five regular season games because of injuries, that took him out of the second half of the AFC Championship game at Buffalo. Montana was in the training room and unavailable for comment after Sunday's 10-9 loss to Seattle.

McLaren to race at Le Mans in 1995

LONDON (R) — The McLaren Formula One team revealed Monday they would be entering the Le Mans 24 hours sports car race for the first time in 1995. McLaren, one of the most successful teams in Grand Prix racing, will enter their F1 "supercar" together with American fuel company Gulf Oil. They will contest nine other sports car races.

Wales manager gets vote of confidence

CARDIFF (R) — Beleaguered Wales soccer manager Mike Smith has been given a vote of confidence — three days before he names his squad for the crunch European Championship qualifier against Bulgaria. The Football Association of Wales reacted Monday to speculation that former team heads Terry Yorath and John Toshack along with Brian Clough were being touted as successors. The Welsh F.A. said Smith was still in charge. Welsh soccer chiefs are due to meet December 7 when their disastrous start to the European Championship, which has seen humiliating defeats by Georgia and Moldova, is sure to be discussed. There has been criticism of Smith with striker Ian Rush openly questioning in a newspaper column the tactics used in the 5-0 hammering in Georgia.

Thai yields flyweight title

EAST ORANGE, N.J. (AP) — Pichit Sithbangprachan of Thailand has given up the IBF flyweight championship rather than defend his title against top-ranked Jose Luis Zepeda of the United States. The move was announced Monday by IBF president Robert Lee and took effect last Friday. Sithbangprachan won a split decision over Zepeda May 8 in Bangkok, Thailand. He had been ordered to make a mandatory defense in a rematch by Dec. 4. Lee said the IBF will move quickly to match Zepeda with second-ranked Francisco Tejedor of Colombia for the vacant 112-pound title.

Trapattoni to stay at Bayern

MUNICH (R) — Bayern Munich vice-president Karl-Heinz Rummenigge Tuesday quashed speculation that Italian coach Giovanni Trapattoni was set to leave the club after their lackluster start to the season. "Trapattoni is definitely staying as coach until June 30, 1995. Nothing is going to change that situation," Rummenigge said in answer to press reports that the Bayern trainer might be in the running for a job as Italian national team coach. One recent report suggested it was going to be announced on December 8 that Trapattoni would replace struggling Italian boss Arrigo Sacchi and that Bayern were already talking to possible new trainers.

Maradona may call strike against drugs test

BUENOS AIRES (R) — Controversial Diego Maradona, whose career was dented by drugs and scandals, said Monday he was considering calling a soccer players' strike against mass drugs tests. "This cannot go on like this," he told a local radio station. The 34-year-old former soccer superstar said he was calling a players' meeting on Wednesday to discuss the tests. Maradona's anger was triggered by an ongoing probe initiated last June by a federal judge who ordered 32 players to undergo tests after an anonymous caller accused them of being "junkies." All the players of Platense and Gimnasia y Esgrima La Plata tested negative in June. But two of them failed a second test conducted this month under judge Roberto Marquiech's orders. "These players are no drug addicts," said Maradona.



Jansher Khan: Millionaire without play

DORA (AP) — Jansher Khan, the world squash champion, is set to become a millionaire this season — without having to lift a racket.

The 25-year-old Pakistani star, who has won six world titles, has already passed the \$800,000 mark in sponsorship agreements with European, American and Pakistani companies.

"Negotiations are going on with a number of large Japanese institutions," said Munir Akbar Baloch, one of Khan's advisers.

"If agreements are signed, then Jansher's income would be enhanced from 800,000 to a million dollars," Baloch told reporters Tuesday.

On Monday, Khan said he would boycott all tournaments in his native Pakistan as well as the world team championships after a row with his main sponsor, Pakistan International Airways.

Khan accused PIA, which back him with around \$100,000 a year, of not honoring a promise to make him the company's general manager when he retires from the sport.

"I was promised 18 months ago that I would gain the promotion if I won the British and World Open," said Jansher, who accused the managing director of PIA, Omar Farooq, of being a "liar."

"I should have been promoted from grade nine manager to grade 10 general manager, but he hasn't done it. He has promoted his friends instead," said the infuriated player.

"Because of that, I will not play any national or international tournaments in Pakistan and I will not play for Pakistan in the World Team Championships."

Jansher added that he has not been paid the respect he deserves for the work he does in promoting Pakistan through the sport.

Khan has won the title here for the past two years.

His outrage had no bearing on the tournament here Monday, where the Pakistani world champion defeated Adrian Davies of Wales 15-11, 15-10, 15-11 in the first round.

In Monday's first match, England's Del Harris beat countryman Tony Hands. Hands was forced to retire with a hamstring injury.

Rejuvenated Sonics beat Pacers 118-99

SEATTLE (Agencies) — The Seattle SuperSonics are showing some life.

The results haven't measured up to the potential until recently but the talent-rich Sonics were feeling rejuvenated on Monday after beating the Indiana Pacers 118-99, led by Gary Payton's season-high 28 points and Sam Perkins' 20 off the bench.

Detlef Schrempf scored 18 points and Shawn Kemp and Kendall Gill added 16 apiece for Seattle, which won the fifth time in its last six games after losing three in a row. The Sonics improved to 5-1 at home.

"I don't know what it is, but we've been in a little funk," said Perkins. "We haven't been ourselves the first half of the season. But we've started to show some life."

Reggie Miller scored 20 points for Indiana, which lost its second straight game after winning four in a row.

"You've got to understand, the road is the toughest place to win in the NBA," said Pacers guard Byron Scott. "You've got to have a different mentality. We're coming out laid back, like we sewed up the eastern conference."

Seattle, which scored the first eight points of the game, led 27-21 after the first quarter.

The Sonics, who led by 14 points at halftime, scored the first five points of the third quarter and never looked back. The closest the Pacers got in the second half was 73-60 with 6:59 left in third period.

Scott added 15 points for Indiana, and Rik Smits and Sam Mitchell had 12 apiece.

"We all know we're not playing well," Scott said. "We're going to have to do some serious soul searching to know what we want to accomplish as a team."

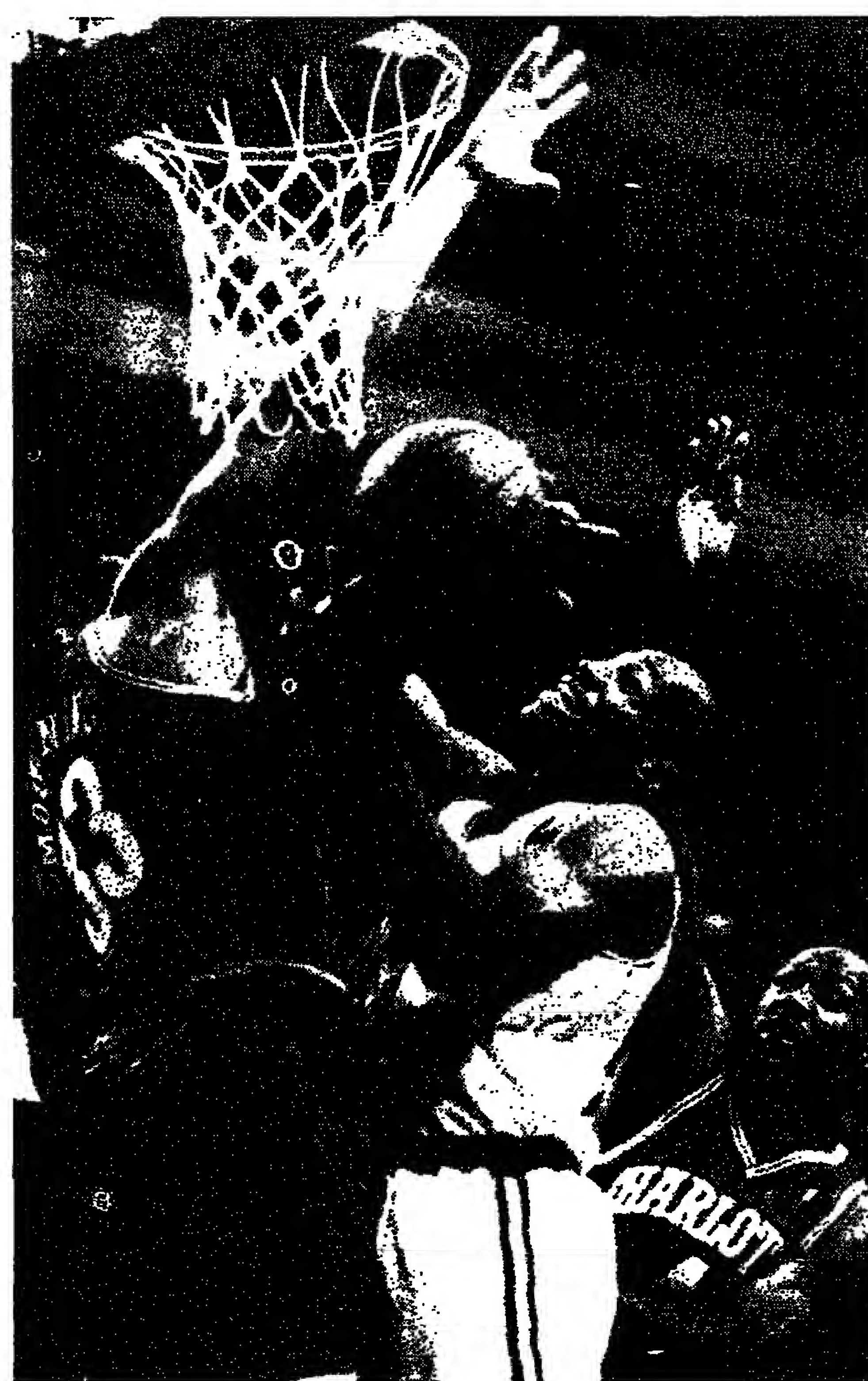
In San Antonio, David Robinson had 24 points and 10 rebounds as the Spurs held on for a 92-88 victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves.

The Spurs blew nearly all of a 14-point third-quarter lead but made 8-of-8 free throws in the final three minutes to hand the Timberwolves their sixth straight loss and 12th in their 13 games this season.

Robinson became the franchise's second all-time leading scorer, raising his career total to 10,298 points, eight more than James Silas. George Gervin holds the franchise record with 23,602 points.

"Obviously we didn't play that well," said the Wolves' Chuck Person, who scored 10 points. "We're still trying to find the right way for us to play and to find out each other's tendencies on the floor."

Vinny Del Negro scored 19 points and Sean Elliott added 16 for San Antonio, which



Derek Strong of the Boston Celtics (centre) battles for control of the ball with Charlotte Hornets Alozo Mourning (left) and Darrin Hancock (right) during their match at the Boston Garden (AFP photo)

had lost five of its previous seven games.

Isaiah Rider scored 23 points and Sean Rooks and Doug West added 18 each for the Mavericks, whose 13-69 and 11-71 showings the past two weeks were the worst records in the National Basketball Association (NBA).

"Last year will make me better, but I never want to go through anything like that again," Mashburn said. "This is a fresh start for everybody."

The Mavericks (6-4) feature two of the NBA's top three scorers in Mashburn, who averages 27.7 points, and guard Jim Jackson, whose 30.2 points a game are second only to Shaquille O'Neal.

Jamal Mashburn knows the difference a year can make because he celebrated much

more Tuesday than his 22nd birthday.

The small forward survived a troubled rookie season to spark a revival of the Dallas Mavericks, whose 13-69 and 11-71 showings the past two weeks were the worst records in the National Basketball Association (NBA).

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"I don't know if we will both be able to average 30 points a game, but we're going to try," Mashburn said.

"We will score a bunch of points. People are accepting their roles this year, not trying to get out of them."

Mashburn spent most of last season feuding with coach Quinn Buckner, who was fired from his first NBA post and replaced by 22-year veteran Dick Motta.

"Last season was pretty much jail," Mashburn said. "Nothing positive came out of it. We were unhappy and uncomfortable. This year makes you realise how hard last year was and what a disservice we did having a coach who didn't know what was going on."



Nantes midfielder Raynald Pedros (left) Division match. Nantes won the match 1-0 attempts to pass Cannes defender Philip Raschke during their French First

French League on trial as Bastia answer violence charges

PARIS (AFP) — The French Football League Thursday launches an investigation into an appalling catalogue of violence during the first division match between Bastia and Monaco at weekend.

Ostensibly, Bastia will be in the dock but the league itself will also be on trial. Bastia will attempt to put a positive spin on a grim episode which includes just about every possible permutation of football hooliganism — a pitch invasion, attacks on players and match officials and players attacking one another.

The evidence is irrefutable and includes video footage of the violence which was broadcast on nationwide television.

The facts are not in question — but the football league's will to combat football violence most definitely is.

The match degenerated after only 12 minutes when Monaco had taken a 2-0 lead and a free-for-all broke out between the players after Bastia's Eric Dewilder fouled Laurent Viaud.

The match resumed until the 43rd minute when referee Antoine de Pandis ruled offside a Bastia goal by Anton Drobnyak shortly after turning down a Bastia appeal for a penalty.

First the linesman and the De Pandis were mob-

bed by fans invading the pitch. De Pandis was hit in the eye by a coin and his shirt was torn. Monaco's captain Claude Puel was smashed on the head and teammate Lilian Thuram was also struck.

De Pandis pulled both teams off the field and in the tunnel Monaco's international defender Eric Di Meco had his nose broken when he was head-butted by Bastia's Laurent Moracchini.

De Pandis brought the players back on the pitch after 28 minutes to prevent a potential riot in the stands.

But for Monaco, the second half was a disaster. With both substitutes already used — one to replace the battered Di Meco — they were forced to play the last 30 minutes with only 10 men after Viaud came off injured.

Bastia scored twice in the closing 25 minutes to salvage a draw.

Monaco are awaiting justice from the football league investigation but they may be bitterly disappointed.

"The league has not taken its responsibilities too seriously in recent cases," said Monaco coach Jean-Luc Ettori.

Bastia face a possible season ban from their Furiani stadium which is being refurbished after a stand collapsed in May

1992, killing 15 fans and injuring 2,000.

The result of the match could also be overturned to give Monaco three points for a win.

But the Corsican club have grounds for optimism. After the match free champagne was rushed to the referee's room and De Pandis was winned and dined until late into the night by Bastia officials.

The league's record of failure to take effective action in similar cases of stadium violence this season also works in Bastia's favour.

Earlier this season the league imposed no sanctions after fighting disrupted the game between Martigues and Paris St. Germain during which missiles rained down on the pitch, including a pair of scissors.

In another incident, the league did nothing to punish the guilty parties after a fan ran on to the pitch and attacked a player during the Bordeaux match against Lens.

"When are the league going to take a stand against this kind of violence," the French sports daily L'Equipe asked Monday.

Monaco president Jean-Luis Campora is hoping for decisive action from the league. "But if we don't get it there will be an appeal," he said.

China furious over drug revelations as sports federations toughen regulations

BEIJING (AFP) — Chinese Olympic Committee secretary-general Wei Jizhong Tuesday angrily condemned a Japanese sports official for revealing that 11 Chinese athletes had failed drug tests last month at Asia's prime sporting showcase.

Wei said he could not comment on reports of the positive tests during the Asian Games in Hiroshima. But he said Yoshio Kuroda, the Japanese head of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) medical commission, should not have confirmed the cases before the inquiry was completed.

"The rules, adopted by all the members of the Olympic Council of Asia, stipulate that in the case of positive tests, only the OCA president and spokesman are empowered to make a statement," Wei said.

His attack came as senior OCA officials said the latest scandal would cost China its chances of staging the Olympic Games.

Kuroda has confirmed that 11 Chinese athletes tested positive during Asia's major sporting event held from October 2 to 16, which was dominated by China.

Kuroda would not give identities, but Japanese press reports said Lu Bin, winner of four swimming gold medals, was among those who tested positive. Up to eight of the failed tests may have come from the controversial swimming squad.

Kuroda said Tuesday he would call a special meeting

in December to hear the case of the 11 Chinese athletes involved.

"I'm planning to set up a sports medical committee on December 15 or 16 to submit to the OCA our final results of the cases from the medical point of view," Kuroda told AFP.

Japan's Yomiuri Shimbun newspaper reported Tuesday that besides Lu, four male swimmers tested positive, including Xiong Guoming, 20, winner of four golds, Hu Bin, 21, who won the 50-metre freestyle, and Zhang Bin, 18, winner of the 200-metre butterfly.

The daily, quoting sources close to the OCA, said Yang Aihua, another female swimmer, who tested positive in an earlier random sampling test, was also among the 11.

Kuroda said the OCA might take a decision on whether to disqualify the Chinese athletes at a board meeting on January 5 in Harbin, China.

The Chinese Olympic committee chief said he could make no comment until after the OCA had met.

Last week the International Swimming Federation banned Yang Aihua, the world 400m freestyle champion, for two years. She tested positive for banned drugs on September 30 during a pre-Asian Games swoop by FINA inspectors.

Seventeen-year-old Yang is the fifth Chinese swimmer to fail a test in the past two years. More than 30 athletes from all sports have tested positive since 1987.

OCA executive members, who requested anonymity, told AFP that the latest scandal may cost China any chance of staging the Olympic Games.

"China had wanted to use their success at the Hiroshima Asian Games last month to launch a bid to stage the 2004 Olympics," said one OCA member.

China won 137 gold medals at the Games, more than twice second-placed South Korea. "They wanted to use their status as the regional sporting superpower to announce their candidacy in a blaze of publicity," he added.

"This has ruined everything. There is no proof that China is orchestrating the use of drugs but the International Olympic Committee cannot ignore this."

IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch has leapt to the defence of Chinese sport several times in the past. The last time was when he was at the Asian Games, when he said he was convinced that Chinese sport was "drug free."

Another OCA executive member said: "Samaranch is not a man to let down in such a position and he plays a key role in deciding where an Olympics is held."

China was already thought to have suffered from a Tiananmen Square massacre backlash when it lost the 2000 Games to Sydney. Cape Town is already a candidate for the 2004 Games. Wei said at Hiroshima that China would make its position about a future Olympic bid

known soon.

Drugs net tightens

Growing suspicions about the reasons behind China's sports superpower status has compelled several international federations to step up testing procedures.

On Monday, when it was reported that 11 Chinese competitors failed tests for banned performance-enhancing substances at last month's Asian Games, the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) decided to toughen regulations further.

Drug-cheat athletes will now be banned on the basis of the first positive test instead of two, the IAAF council decided.

Athletes can still insist on a second sample being tested. But the move was a clear sign of the growing embarrassment at the continuing drug scandals casting a shadow over the movement.

"Pressure has been building for several months for stricter tests because the drug problem seems to be cropping up again. The Chinese are an important factor, though not the only one," said an Olympic Council of Asia executive member about the latest scandal.

In addition, track and field athletes will have to sign a waiver agreeing to resolve all doping disputes within the sport's guidelines before going to court, the IAAF decided Tuesday.

The decision, is designed

to make court action a means of last resort for athletes.

"The form stipulates that the athlete agrees that all disputes arising from doping control will be resolved in accordance with arbitration rules," IAAF spokesman Christopher Winner said. "That essentially means before an athlete goes to the courts he or she is obliged to go through our system first."

Reports of the newest blow to China's reputation — confirmed by the tests on a second batch of urine samples — have emphasised that none of super coach Ma Junren's army of world-beating runners were among the positive tests.

Coaches from rival nations have made repeated complaints about the Chinese swimmers, who won 12 of the 16 gold medals at the World Championships in Rome in September.

Techniques to detect drug cheats are becoming more sophisticated. But sports officials say athletes are also taking advantage of latest research.

"Despite the shaming of the likes of Ben Johnson, though, naked ambition is still a powerful force," said one International Olympic Committee observer in Hiroshima.

Another problem is that different federations have different test methods and rules for carrying out tests. The IOC has been trying for several years to introduce universal techniques.

S.African keeper doubtful for Ivory Coast match

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — South African goalkeeper Steve Crowley is a doubtful starter against Ivory Coast when a four-nation tournament continues Wednesday night in Port Elizabeth.

The Kaizer Chiefs star pulled a leg muscle during the shock 2-1 victory over Ghana in Pretoria at the weekend, and hardly moved when Frank Amankwah scored a soft goal from long range.

Wade du Plessis, from lowly Durban club D'Albertyon, will win his first cap in Crowley, who has represented his country in 16 of their 23 matches, fails to fitness test.

Ruud Gullit-lookalike Augustine Makalalane, last capped against Nigeria two years ago, has been freed by Swiss club Baden and joined

the squad Monday. Coach Clive Barker says the clash with the Ivorians, who defeated Cameroon 2-1 in their opening match, will decide who pockets the \$70,000 first prize.

The Elephants relied on players from Abidjan clubs ASEC, Africa Sports and Stade to tame the Indomitable Lions through goals from Bi-Tra Yoro and Charles Dago.

New French coach Pierre Pleimelding lamented many missed chances, and goals even harder to find against the quick-covering South Africans.

Barker switched long-serving midfielder Neil Tovey to the heart of defence in the absence of Turkish-based

Steve Komphela and the chiefs veteran adapted superbly to his new role.

Ghana will lack star midfielder and captain Abedi Pele, who has returned to Italian club Torino, for the opening game against Cameroon at Boet Erasmus rugby stadium.

The Black Stars, African champions a record four times, are still smarting from their defeat by a South African team missing seven regular players.

Leading official Sam Brewster claimed Marks Mapanyane was offside when he headed the opening goal and that Doctor Khumalo took a dive to win the penalty he converted.

But Pele seldom escaped

the shackles of "shadow" Linda Buthelezi and local fans will expect much more from former "wonderboy" Nil Odarety Lamptey in mid-field.

Cameroon were outplayed by Ivory Coast despite coach

Jules Nyongha making nine changes to the team humiliated by Lesotho in the African Nations' Cup.

Nyongha succeeded Frenchman Henri Michel after the World Cup debacle, and faces a mammoth task

Kafelnikov to lead Russia in Davis Cup showdown

PARIS (AFP) — Yevgeny Kafelnikov, the 20-year-old Russian hero who has led his country to its first-ever Davis Cup final, knows that he can afford no mistakes in next weekend's showdown with Sweden.

The big-serving 6ft 3in player, who exploded on to the international scene after a remarkable season which has seen him rise from outside the top-100 to eleventh in the rankings, is all too aware of what is expected of him.

He has been the backbone of Russia's "Cinderella" success in the event — winning all of his singles and also adding a vital point in the doubles alongside Andrei Olhovskiy against first-round opponents Australia and semi-final rivals and defending champions Germany.

Now he wants to complete the job before midnight chimes.

"This is the first time we have reached the final and support is going to be huge. There will be two hundred million people behind us and 20,000 spectators at the match."

"We are not going to play 100 per cent. We are going to play 120 per cent. I am sure it is going to be a great match."

Russia's team captain Vadim Borisov, who has led the Russians on the long journey from the qualifying

round in 1993 to the final, is expected to line up Alexander Volkov and Andrei Olhovskiy alongside Kafelnikov — both competent and experienced players who should give a good account of themselves against the Swedes.

The left-handed Volkov, 26 and ranked 25th, showed what he is capable of when he sowed the first seeds of doubt in German arrogance and overconfidence by beating the then world number-two Michael Stich in the opening singles in Hamburg in September.

And 28-year-old Olhovskiy, ranked 95th and an excellent foil for Kafelnikov in the doubles, has shown that he can also soak up pressure and produce the goods in singles as well. The Moscow player, who thrives on fast surfaces and who has twice reached the fourth round at Wimbledon, clinched Russia's exciting 3-2 second round win over the Czech Republic by beating Slava Dosedel in a dramatic four-set thriller back in July.

Sweden, bidding for their fifth Davis Cup victory, last won the prestigious trophy back in 1987 when they crushed India 5-0 in Gothenburg in the final. They were also finalists in 1988 and 1989 but lost both years to Boris Becker's Germany.

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2ND
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MARRIOTT HOTEL

GOREN BRIDGE
WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSH
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RIGHTING A WRONG

North-South vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ A Q 10 2
♥ K 3 2
♦ A 7 5 4
♣ A J 9 8 4

EAST
♠ K 10 7 5 2
♥ Q K 8 3
♦ 10 7 6 5
♣ 4

SOUTH
♠ K 3
♥ J 4
♦ A J 9 8
♣ K J 10 9 6

The bidding:
South West North East
1♠ 1♥ 2♠ 3♠
3NT 4♥ 6♥ Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Ace of ♠

Don't abandon the ship too quickly. Just because you make an unfortunate play doesn't mean the end of the world is here. Look for ways to recover.

Once South had opened the bidding with one club, the North hand became very powerful. East-West's spade bidding made the hand even more impressive and there was no way of stopping North short of a slam.

West led the ace of spades, ruffed in dummy. Had South next cashed the ace of clubs, the lie of the trump suit would have been exposed and, after a finesse for the lady, the slam would have been assured regardless of the location of the king of hearts. But South made the more natural play of a low club from the table to the king and was now saddled with an unavoidable trump loser.

Had declarer relied on the heart finesse the slam would have gone down to defeat. But South, a good technician, wanted better than a 50 percent chance of success.

The king of spades was cashed, followed by the ace of clubs. Declarer then started running diamonds. East realized ruffing was fatal for the defense—that would have trapped the defender in an endplay, so two spades and a heart were discarded.

That merely delayed the inevitable. Declarer exited with a trump and East could choose how to commit suicide. Being a scholar and a gentleman, he simply threw in the hand and conceded the slam.

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Cinema PHILADELPHIA Tel.: 634144 The film which won seven Oscars IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45	Cinema PLAZA Tel.: 699238 David Bradley in Cyborg Cop Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	Cinema CONCORD Tel.: 677420 CONCORD "1" Tom Hanks ... in Sleepless in Seattle Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:15, 10:30 CONCORD "2" Sister Act Shows: 3:15, 5:15	Cinema AMMOUN THEATRE Tel.: 618274 - 618275 Sharon Stone & Richard Gere in Intersection Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30 The family & children play "Water is a gift of life" 10:00 a.m.	Nabil Al Mashini Theatre Tel.: 675571 Thursday...Thursday 1.12.1994 You have a date with Abu Awad at the opening of the new performance of the comedy: A Punctured Bag (Qirbeh Makhzouqa) Ticket window is open all day	Nabil & Hisham's Tel.: 625155 AHLAN THEATRE Presents: The political satire: Al Salam y Salama Daily at 8:30 Saturday & Sunday is the theatre's holiday. In English next Saturday and Sunday
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NEWS IN BRIEF

500,000 amphetamine pills seized in Cairo

CAIRO (AFP) — Police have seized 500,000 amphetamine pills smuggled into Egypt by a drug-trafficker and two accomplices working at Cairo airport, police said Tuesday. The pills, worth a total of four million Egyptian pounds (\$1.3 million), were brought in by an unidentified smuggler in a case left at the airport. The smuggler then flew out again straight away. His two accomplices, an airport worker and a security official, collected the case from the unclaimed luggage department and sold the drugs on the local market, police said.

Israel appoints new northern commander

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel on Tuesday appointed General Amir Levin army commander for the northern region, which covers the border areas with Lebanon and Syria, a military spokesman said. Sen. Levin, born in Palestine in 1946, led Israel's "chief of staff commando unit" for several years. The general, who commanded a tank battalion during Israel's 1992 Lebanon war, has been in charge of manoeuvres for the last two years. He takes over from Gen. Yitzhak Mordechai who retires.

Europe funds 300 more homes for Palestinians

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The European Union (EU) has given the Palestinian self-rule authority \$12 million to build 300 homes in the territories starting in March, officials announced Tuesday. European delegation chief Thomas Dupla said he signed the contract with the Palestinian housing council on Monday. The grant came on top of \$40 million handed over for house construction since 1992 and pushed the total number of EU-funded units in the Gaza Strip and West Bank to 1,200.

Cyprus, Iranians stuffed bread with Hashish

NICOSIA (R) — Three Iranians were arrested at a Cyprus hotel on suspicion of smuggling 1.5 kilos of hashish stuffed inside pitta breads. Police said. Nassir Biba Nejad, 47, Hassab Ibrahim, 42, and Ali Reza Abbadi, 38, were arrested Monday night, police said. "It was probably the third time they were in Cyprus. We believe they are members of a drug ring," a police spokesman said. Police were tipped off and had the men under surveillance.

Smog chokes Istanbul; heating ordered off

ANKARA (R) — Istanbul was choked by smog on Tuesday and authorities ordered heating turned off in homes and offices in the city of 10 million, the Anatolian news agency said. "We have initiated first stage measures following high sulphur dioxide levels and high pressure over the city and no expectation of winds to disperse the smog," Istanbul Deputy Governor Rubi Paker said. Hospitals and health care institutions, schools, nurseries and homes for the elderly were exempted from the measure after sulphur dioxide levels hit 700 micrograms per cubic metres. Officials asked the elderly, children and people with heart or chest ailments not to leave their homes unless necessary. Istanbul has developed a serious air pollution problem in recent years as authorities are unable to check use of low-grade coal by millions of rural immigrants. Heating by non-polluting natural gas, only partly installed in the city, was allowed.

Pizza deliveryman freed in Cyprus

NICOSIA (R) — A Greek Pizza deliveryman who strayed across the U.N.-patrolled buffer zone in divided Cyprus and was jailed in the Turkish side was released, authorities said on Tuesday. George Koutsoukoulas, 24, of Salonika, a student at the higher technical institute in Nicosia, was freed on Monday night after crossing into the Turkish Cypriot side on Saturday while trying to deliver a pizza to a U.N. post in Nicosia, police said. He was allowed to cross by Greek Cypriot national guards who mistook his white-painted van for a U.N. vehicle, they said. Mr. Koutsoukoulas told reporters in the government-controlled area that he had not been mistreated but that Turkish soldiers had asked him about the number of Greek nationals on the island. The government of Cyprus and Greece protested to the United Nations over the detention and hundreds of Greek and Greek Cypriot students demonstrated for his immediate release.

Egypt rejects U.S. criticism

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt on Monday dismissed U.S. press reports that it had broken the U.N. embargo imposed on Libya saying it was upholding all Security Council resolutions. "Egypt's concern to preserve the interests of the Libyan people while respecting international resolutions," Foreign Minister Amr Musa said. "Any press campaign, critical or praising will not change Egypt's position," he told journalists on returning from Saudi Arabia. The Security Council slapped an air and military embargo on Libya in 1992, after Tripoli refused to hand over two Libyans suspected in the 1989 bombing of a Pan Am airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, which killed 270 people. Libya has refused to allow the men to be tried in either Britain or the United States. Egypt has backed a compromise put forward by the Arab League and Libya, to try the men at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, a proposal rejected by Washington and London. The Washington Post and the U.S. News and World Report said in early November that Libya and Egypt had "privileged links."

Cairo says missing firearms stolen in 1989

CAIRO (AFP) — The interior ministry has said that 538 machine guns and revolvers were stolen from a security services store in 1989, denying reports that the theft had happened eight days ago. "That incident took place in 1989 and not on November 20," the ministry said in a statement to AFP. It added that a policeman implicated in the theft from the store in Qena was later suspended, and that 121 arms had been recovered. Police said Saturday that thieves had broken into the store the previous weekend and stolen the weapons, and Interior Minister Hassan Ali Alfi had ordered an inquiry.

Iran 'fully alert' over Western presence

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's navy is "fully alert" over the presence of Western forces in the Gulf and ready to defend itself in case of attack, a navy commander said in remarks published Tuesday. Rear Admiral Abbas Mohtaj, the navy's second-in-command, said 40 Iranian ships were "constantly monitoring the movement of foreign warships in the Gulf. We are fully alert and are prepared to defend our territorial waters from foreign invasion," he said, quoted by the English daily Kayhan International on Tuesday. Since the end of the 1991 war, U.S. British and French forces have staged regular joint manoeuvres with Gulf Arab states.

Israeli premier to visit Hungary

BUDAPEST (AFP) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin arrives in Hungary on Friday to attend a Socialist International (SI) meeting ahead of a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe summit. SI secretary-general Luis Ayala said here on Tuesday. The meeting of the SI will take place from Dec. 1 to 3 and the CSCE summit on Dec. 5 and 6, both in the Hungarian capital. Mr. Rabin will also meet members of Hungary's Jewish community. The length of the Israeli premier's stay has not been announced.



SUB FOR SALE: A sailor clears the surface of the submarine "Piranya" from ice at Kronstadt harbour, near St. Petersburg, where the submarine, designed for intelligence and diversion action, is waiting for a buyer (AFP photo)

Israeli strategists propose annexation

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israel's leading strategic studies centre suggested Tuesday that the government annex more than a tenth of the West Bank under a final peace settlement with the Palestinians.

What the Jaffee Centre for Strategic Studies called a "moderate territorial compromise" would annex to Israel 11 per cent of the territory which houses 70 per cent of the Jewish settlers.

The zones it recommends for annexation are east, west and south of Jerusalem and a belt along the northwest border of the territory.

"It would be inconceivable for the Israelis to remove all the 120,000 settlers," Jaffee director Joseph Alpher said.

East Jerusalem, which was "annexed" in 1967, and the 160,000 Israelis living there, were not considered by the centre although the Palestinians demand control of the sector as well as the entire West Bank.

All other settlements, including those on the Gaza Strip would be dismantled, Mr. Alpher told reporters.

Israeli, Jordanian police working together in Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE (Agencies) — Israeli and Jordanian police are working together for the first time as part of a U.N. programme to monitor and restrain the Haitian police, leaders of the two teams said Monday.

Master Sergeant Shimon Avishai and Jordanian Lieutenant Colonel Samed Abu Ourabi described their work at a news conference held by the U.S. embassy.

Sgt. Avishai, a 16-year veteran of the Israeli border guards, said the presence of the Israeli and Jordanian police in the same operation was a first for the two countries, which signed a peace treaty Oct. 26.

The Jordanian police are veterans of similar U.N. operations in Angola, Cambodia, Croatia, Mozambique and Rwanda, Col. Abu Ourabi said.

Both the Israeli and Jordanian forces are working side-by-side in this Caribbean nation to help build a Haitian police force respectful of human rights.

"This is the first time we

are at peace and working together," Sgt. Avishai said Monday at the news conference to explain what international police monitors are doing.

The 38-member Israeli and 150-member Jordanian contingents are part of the 802-member, 20-nation international police monitor corps in Haiti to monitor and restrain Haiti's once notoriously repressive police.

"They hated police officers before," Sgt. Avishai said. His contingent works in Carrefour, the poor metropolitan neighbourhood where soldiers and police officers routinely beat and killed civilians until President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's return Oct. 15 from more than three years in exile.

Until Sept. 19, when the U.S. led a multinational force to pave the way for Mr. Aristide's return, the 7,500-member army included more than 1,000 metropolitan policemen. The police are due to be placed under civilian control and the army will be cut to 1,500 officers.

Carrefour residents closed down one police station and gutted another after the multinational incursion. Israeli monitors will organise a "megastation" that will control several neighbourhood precincts.

Sgt. Avishai said the Israeli police monitors are training Haitian police to become a "community police, to serve." Making their rounds with Haitian police, the Israelis tell the residents that "now they have a new police. The people saw there is a difference," he said.

The Jordanian contingent gives on-the-job short course training, patrolling the capital with armed Haitian police around the clock, Col. Abu Ourabi said.

Both Israelis and Jordanians have fulfilled unexpected duties. Together they looked for and found a missing boy. Both have helped pregnant women deliver their babies.

One mother called her baby "Israel," the other "Jordan," said Sgt. Avishai.

Great train robber dies at own hand

LONDON (Agencies) — Ronald "Buster" Edwards, the brains behind Britain's "great train robbery," was found hanged Tuesday in the garage near where he sold flowers outside London's Waterloo station.

He was 62. Police said it was suicide.

The one-time nightclub owner was freed in 1975 after serving nine years in prison for the job that netted £2.5 million and became grist for legend, the subject of a book, a song and a film.

In the small hours of the morning of Aug. 8, 1963, Edwards and his gang lay in wait for the overnight Royal Mail train southbound out of Glasgow.

They rigged a signal light to flash red, and as the train slowed at Bridgegate Bridge near Cheddington, Buckinghamshire, they jumped aboard armed with iron bars.

They clubbed motorman Jack Mills unconscious and fled with the sacks of bank notes to a remote farmhouse, which they soon had to abandon as police, alerted by a neighbour, closed in.

One by one, the gangsters were caught and jailed. Edwards led police on a three-year chase before surrendering.

"Obviously, I thought I'd get away with it," he once said in an interview. "But looking back, I can see now that we were mugs, with that sort of cash involved."

Edwards said his biggest regret in the robbery was his assault on Mills, who never fully recovered from his injuries and died in 1970.

He said his life selling flowers to commuters bored him, to tears.

"I was a criminal even before the great train robbery and life was so exciting then," he said.

"I didn't care about the money. I did jobs that didn't net a penny. It was the thrill that mattered."

Police stressed there were no suspicious circumstances in the death of Edwards, who was played by pop star Phil Collins in a film biography of his eventful life.

Paramedics tried in vain to resuscitate Edwards, who was found hanging from a metal girder by his brother.

Fellow train robber Ronnie Biggs, speaking from Rio de Janeiro, told Sky Television: "It is very, very sad, depressing and surprising news to hear he has taken his life."

The thieves behind the great train robbery became instant celebrities approximately \$45 million at today's rates.

The audacious robbery was hailed at the time as "the crime of the century."

Mr. Biggs, who fled the country and escaped extradition for 30 years, said: "It is sad to see the gang cut down one by one. I have often wondered who would be the first and the last to go."

Mr. Biggs said he would definitely not be coming back for Edwards' funeral. "I am sure he would like me to get a bottle of booze out and have a good drink with him," Mr. Biggs said.

Retired detective Jack "Slipper of the Yard" Slipper, who hunted Mr. Biggs to Brazil but failed to bring him back, said the gang was a different class of criminal from today's lawbreakers.

"In our day you could sit down and have a chat to them and when they came out from prison you'd invariably run into them and have a drink with them," Mr. Slipper said.

Charles' 2nd cousin slams his lack of remorse

LONDON (AP) — A second cousin to Prince Charles has joined the list of royal grippers, slamming the heir to the British throne for his infidelities and ego. "He doesn't express any remorse for straying from his marital vows. No apologies to his family, his kids, even his wife," complained Marina Mowatt, 26th in line to the throne, in an interview published Monday. A biography of Charles published last month with his cooperation confirmed that the prince had an affair with a married woman and long-standing friend, Camilla Parker Bowles. He and Princess Diana, mother of both his sons, formally announced their separation in December 1992. Mowatt, who is daughter to Princess Alexandra, first cousin to Queen Elizabeth — and Prince Charles' goddaughter to boot — told Hello magazine that she thought — Prince Charles was a publicity hound. "I just couldn't shrug off the feeling that the... book (was) all part of Charles' concern for his popularity ratings more than any genuine concern for real people," the magazine quoted Mowatt as saying. Mowatt, 28, is no stranger to publicity herself. Dubbed the "royal rebel" for her 1990 wedding to a commoner when four months pregnant, she also earned 1991's "year of the year" award proffered by a British jeans company. Charles, 45, appeared in good spirits late Monday at London's Dominion Theatre, where he met singers Tony Bennett, Shirley Bassey and other celebrities at the 67th annual royal variety performance.

Diana presides over children's gala evening

PARIS (AFP) — The Princess of Wales arrived here Monday to preside an international children's gala evening at Versailles Palace organised by UNESCO. Princess Diana's visit was one of her engagements she was to carry out on her visit as president of the Barnardo's Charity, which looks after some 100,000 disadvantaged young people. The princess was invited to France by the French Children's Society, of which the wife of former President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, Anne-Aymone, is patron. Dressed in a deep blue suit, the princess spent 40 minutes at a crèche which provides round-the-clock care for children from broken homes. Later, the princess was to go on to attend the second international gala evening at the Versailles Palace for child welfare, organised by the French Children's Society with the support of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Premature baby stable after in-flight birth

WASHINGTON (AP) — The De Bara family boarded TWA Flight 265 in New York as a family of three en route to a holiday trip at Disney World. Ninety minutes later the De Bara's left the plane in suburban Washington an excited and anxious family of four. On the way, Theresa De Bara, nearly seven months pregnant, went into labour and, with the help of a Long Island internist and two paramedics from Newburyport, Mass., Matthew Dulles De Bara was born 90 miles (145-kms) outside Washington's Dulles International Airport. "I went from being nervous and distraught to imploring to God that it wouldn't turn into a tragedy," said Ms. De Bara of the in-flight delivery. "Your mind just shuts down, and you turn it over to those in control." Santiago De Bara and his 3-year-old daughter Amanda stood by while Steven H. Rachlin assisted Mrs. De Bara with the birth. "Here I was on a vacation to relax, and then I was on an airplane being asked to deliver a baby. I was in an altered state," Dr. Rachlin told a reporter from the Washington Post Friday. He said he had delivered only one baby before — 13 years ago. He originally thought Ms. De Bara was experiencing false labour pains.